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The University of Southern Mississippi

A TALE OF TWO CITIES: VICKSBURG AND NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI
DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

by

Ruth Poe White

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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ABSTRACT

A TALE OF TWO CITIES: VICKSBURG AND NATCHEZ, MISSISSIPPI DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

by Ruth Poe White

May 2014

In 1860, Vicksburg and Natchez, Mississippi, had far more in common with each other than with the rest of the state. Most significantly, they both opposed secession. Beyond that opposition and their initial support for the war, however, the two city's reactions differed. This thesis argues that one of the main reasons for this difference is that two distinct communities developed in each city. Pre-war experiences shaped the citizens of Natchez and Vicksburg, allowing Vicksburg civilians to quickly develop feelings of Confederate nationalism, while their Natchez counterparts, loyal to their city and their national trade networks, were more pro-Unionist but used Confederate nationalism when it suited their interests. Ironically, only after the war did the people of Natchez fully embrace Southern ideology.

Most historians have not questioned these varied reactions in the two cities or placed them within the debate over Confederate nationalism. This work engages the arguments of both Stephanie McCurry and Anne Rubin, who build on classic scholarship on Confederate nationalism by Emory Thomas, Drew Gilpin Faust, and Gary Gallagher. Thomas Bender's discussion on using community study as a method of historical inquiry, in particular, provides the basis for the following approach, which views a community as a field of social interaction. This thesis applies their arguments to smaller locales and shows the reasons nationalism could be both strong and weak within different areas of a

Southern state. This work is grounded in the 1860 U.S. Census Records, private letters and diaries of both Vicksburg and Natchez citizens, and the secondary literature on the nature of community.

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I am also grateful to other faculty members at the University of Southern Mississippi – including Dr. Heather Stur, Dr. Andrew Haley, and Dr. Allison Abra – whose excitement for history is contagious and pushed me to look for new methodologies in fields beyond my love for Early American and Civil War History. All of my fellow graduate students but especially Stephanie Seal, Tyler Rotter, and Angela Riotto have also challenged me and become invaluable sources of both academic and emotional support.

I would also like to thank the History Department at Southern Miss for its financial assistance for both research and conference travel. I have received grants from both the Center for the Study of the Gulf South and the Dale Center for the Study of War

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This project would not have been possible without the invaluable expertise of the librarians and archivists who assisted me throughout my research. I am especially grateful to the staff at the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and the Vicksburg Old Court House Museum for their assistance and extensive knowledge on their holdings. In particular, I am deeply indebted to Bubba Baum at the Old Court House for his ardent support of my project and his efforts to find sources on the civilians and soldiers of Vicksburg.

Finally, I could not end these acknowledgements without thanking my family for its patience and unquestioning encouragement. My parents, Will and Denise Poe offered me financial support and their home for my research trips, and they never questioned my requests to visit the countless museums and antebellum homes I wanted to see as a child. Both of them, but especially Will Poe, have spent an immeasurable amount of time patiently listening to me describe my research and the many books graduate students cannot help but discuss. My brothers, William and James Poe, and my husband, Andrew White always remind me to look beyond the world of academia, and I could not have completed this project without them. Drew, especially, has been my rock throughout this adventure, and his love and unflinching faith in my abilities constantly pushed me to continue working. I have been truly blessed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: RIVER CITIES: THE CONUNDRUM OF A CIVIL WAR

The following study addresses questions about Confederate nationalism and the reasons Southerners chose to or chose not to resist the Union in two communities during the American Civil War: Vicksburg and Natchez, Mississippi. As this thesis will demonstrate, two distinct communities developed in each city, and their responses to the war were, in part, products of pre-war characteristics. Vicksburg civilians quickly developed feelings of Confederate nationalism, while their Natchez counterparts instead maintained a commitment to their city and their national trade networks.

Situated on bluffs high above the Mississippi River, the cities' waterfronts provided booming ports that allowed them to emerge as centers of trade and commerce, with networks ranging from New Orleans to Kansas City. Their capitalistic natures differentiated them from much of the state as homes to large, urban populations; by 1860, they had become the two largest cities in Mississippi, with Natchez's population estimated at 6,600 and Vicksburg's at around 4,800.¹ Despite these similarities, the two communities were significantly different.

In Natchez, the fertility of the region's soil attracted many planters who built large plantations in the area. By the late 1700s, these planters had brought thousands of slaves to the region and had established a burgeoning city deeply entrenched in the slave

¹ Christopher Morris, *Becoming Southern: The Evolution of a Way of Life, Warren County and Vicksburg, Mississippi 1770-1860* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Michael Ballard, *Vicksburg: The Campaign that Opened the Mississippi* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2004); and U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1860).

economy. So important was trade and slavery to the region that Natchez eventually had the largest slave market in the state of Mississippi, the Forks of the Road Market.²

As a leader in the region's politics and the wealthiest city in the state, as well as one of the wealthiest in the South, Natchez's white population tended to build homes and remain in the area, contributing to the city's growth. As William Scarborough shows in *Masters of the Big House*, three-fourths of Mississippi's largest planters who owned more than 250 slaves, lived in Natchez.³ The result was a white population deeply dependent upon slave-based, commercial agriculture with important trade networks outside of the state.

While British settlers developed Natchez, speculators from the North and the Southeast had established Vicksburg. Gambling, drinking, and prostitution plagued the young city, which lacked the long-standing social institutions that traditionally curbed such vices. In the 1830s, established residents tried to address these problems by organizing a local militia, and they even attempted a violent city-wide purge of "undesirables." But these problems persisted throughout the 1850s, discouraging visitors from settling in Vicksburg. Additionally, these qualities provided interactions between the local slave population and poor whites, which concerned what community leaders existed in Vicksburg. In particular, they worried about the violence that often originated

² Barnett, Jim and H. Clark Burkett, "The Forks of the Road Slave Market at Natchez." *Journal of Mississippi History* 63, no. 3 (2001): 168-187 and Clayton D. James, *Antebellum Natchez* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993).

³ James, *Antebellum Natchez*; William K. Scarborough, *Masters of the Big House: Elite Slaveholders of the Mid-Nineteenth-Century South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2003); Julia Huston Nguyen, "The Value of Learning: Education and Class in Antebellum Natchez," *Journal of Mississippi History* 61, no. 3 (1999): 237-263; and Anthony E. Kaye, *Joining Places: Slave Neighborhoods in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2009). For more on Antebellum Natchez, see also, Robert E. May, *John A. Quitman, Old South Crusader* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985) and Michael Wayne, *Death of an Overseer: Reopening a Murder Investigation from the Plantation South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

in the gambling dens, where white men perceived even the smallest slights from blacks, like a gambling loss, as threats to their honor.⁴ They also feared poor, single white women who pursued sexual liaisons with both free blacks and slaves, an act that Victoria Bynum shows in *Unruly Women* deeply challenged southern patriarchy.⁵ Established leaders, however, lacked the political influence needed to curb the transients' behavior. Despite these challenges, by 1860, Vicksburg was one of the most cosmopolitan areas in the state.

In contrast to most of the state, which averaged a foreign-born population of 6 percent, 17 percent of the city's population was born abroad, and although some 1860 Vicksburgians were established residents, most of this population was new to the area. Sixty-eight percent of the entire population was born in Mississippi; however, many of these individuals were children. When limited to men between the ages of fifteen and forty-five, this percentage drops to 17 percent.⁶ In general, these men were not even from Mississippi, let alone Vicksburg. As a result, the city's inhabitants varied both culturally and socio-economically, and they were not united through localism, which made the population generally more interested in the South and their own commercial goals than in Vicksburg itself.

Significantly, the city was also only indirectly reliant on the plantation economy; it relied on trade rather than the direct production of cotton and other commercial crops. In comparison to Natchez in the early-nineteenth century, the countryside around

⁴ Morris, *Becoming Southern* and Joshua D. Rothman, "The Hazards of the Flush Times: Gambling, Mob Violence, and the Anxieties of America's Market Revolution," *Journal of American History* 95, no. 3 (2008): 651-677.

⁵ Victoria E. Bynum, *Unruly Women: The Politics of Social and Sexual Control in the Old South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992).

⁶ Morris, *Becoming Southern* and U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

Vicksburg was less fertile, its planters less wealthy, and its population more variant. By 1860, some of these qualities were changing. The distribution of wealth had rapidly decreased, and the area's wealthiest 10 percent owned, on average, forty more slaves than other slaveholders. The small farmers these elites displaced as they expanded often moved to Vicksburg, causing a rapid increase in the city's population and providing a labor source for its growing role in the national economy. Elites in both the city and surrounding countryside were becoming more prosperous.⁷ Adding to this prosperity, Vicksburg had begun to supersede Natchez in importance as a center of trade in Mississippi.⁸ On the eve of the Civil War, these economic and social ties to the North made Natchez and Vicksburg stand apart from most areas of the state in opposing secession, which meant a choice between regional loyalties and economic stability and growth.

When Mississippi seceded on January 9, 1861, many white civilians of the cities supported the decision. Some individuals within the two communities, of course, remained Unionists throughout the war, namely some of the wealthiest plantation owners in Natchez, but, on average, civilians of both cities supported the Confederacy once secession was official.⁹ As this thesis will show, however, this early loyalty to the Confederacy had its limit in Natchez.

⁷ Morris, *Becoming Southern*.

⁸ James, *Antebellum Natchez*.

⁹ William K. Scarborough, "Not Quite Southern: The Precarious Allegiance of the Natchez Nabobs in the Sectional Crisis," *Prologue* 36, no. 4 (2004): 20-29; Morris, *Becoming Southern*; and Scarborough, *Masters of the Big House*. For more on Natchez during the Civil War Era, see Joyce L. Broussard, "Occupied Natchez, Elite Women, and the Feminization of the Civil War," *Journal of Mississippi History* 70, no. 2 (2008): 179-208; Justin Behrend, "Rebellious Talk and Conspiratorial Plots: The Making of a Slave Insurrection in Civil War Natchez," *Journal of Southern History* 77, no. 1 (2011): 17-52; Rebecca M. Dresser, "Kate and John Minor: Confederate Unionists of Natchez," *Journal of Mississippi History* 64, no. 3 (2002): 188-216; Michael Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society: The Natchez District, 1860-1880* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1983); Herschel Gower, *Charles Dahlgren of Natchez: the Civil War and Dynastic Decline* (Washington D.C.: Brassey's Inc.,

As a younger city and home to a large population of newcomers to Mississippi, Vicksburgians were able to shift their loyalty to a new nation more quickly and more willingly than their Natchez counterparts. These men and women were more accustomed to change. With astonishing speed, many of them began to see the Confederate States of America as their nation and saw it as more *American* than the Union itself. They were willing to die defending its independence, and men enlisted, eagerly citing motivations of liberty, duty, and honor.¹⁰ For these men and women, supporting the Confederacy became the best option for protecting their families and their own economic interests from what they perceived as a foreign, oppressive nation, and they began placing the good of the Confederacy above the good of the state and even Vicksburg itself.¹¹ A city that had been almost evenly split between Constitutional Unionists and Southern Democrats in the fall of 1860 embodied – within a matter of months – the idea of Confederate nationalism.¹²

2002); Cecilia M. Shulman, "The Bingamans of Natchez," *Journal of Mississippi History* 63, no.4 (2001): 285-315; Joyce L. Broussard, "Malvina Matthews: The Murderess Madam of Civil War-Era Natchez," *Journal of Mississippi History* 70, no. 2 (2008): 179-208; Cita Cook, "The Practical Ladies of Occupied Natchez." In *Occupied Women: Gender Military Occupation and the American Civil War*, eds. LeeAnn Whites and Alecia P. Long, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009), 114-134; and Leslie Smithers, "Profit and Corruption in Civil War Natchez: A Case History of Union Occupation Government," *Journal of Mississippi History* 64, no. 1 (2002): 17-32; and William Ashley Vaughan, "Natchez During the Civil War" (PhD diss., University of Southern Mississippi, 2001). James L. Roark's *Masters without Slaves* argues that Southerners were committed to slavery and their way of life, and even those who resisted secession were unwilling to fight against the Confederacy. He explains, the war was essentially an effort to protect planters' place in their society. Although he further argues that many men reassessed their commitment to the Confederacy as the war progressed and that a rift developed between Jefferson Davis' administration and planters when he developed a proposal to arm slaves and offer them freedom, his first argument certainly initially fits both Vicksburgians and Natchezians. See, James L. Roark, *Masters Without Slaves: Southern Planters in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1977).

¹⁰ These reasons fit James M. McPherson's argument on both Northern and Southern enlistments in *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford, 1998).

¹¹ The most famous example of this self-sacrifice was Vicksburgians' willingness to endure a forty-seven day siege in 1863.

¹² See, Morris, *Becoming Southern*

In contrast, the locals of Natchez placed the good of the community and their interests in trade above the future of the Confederacy and the state of Mississippi when the two clashed. Once secession was official, these men and women saw defending the Confederacy as the best route for protecting their community's interests and supported the state by enlisting and promoting the war effort. However, because Natchezian residents were closely connected to many of their neighbors and had strong ties to the North, they were less attached to the South and more committed to their own interests within the city. When the good of the Confederacy came into conflict with the future of Natchez, the locals chose the city and quickly surrendered to Union troops.

Ultimately, Vicksburg and Natchez's cases show both the power of the community and the limitations of Confederate nationalism. As Drew Gilpin Faust explains, Southern whites created an ideology to explain the South to the world, history, and to its own people. They used poems, songs, monuments, flags, and other methods to unite the white population behind ideals of Southern exceptionalism. They identified a racially divided social system and identified with national movements like the American War of Independence. In fact, in many Southerners' eyes, the Civil War was a continuation of that struggle. Both elites and non-slaveholders helped create this ideology by proclaiming themselves as special to God and by defaming the North, claiming they were more "American" than the Union. Slavery was a part of that system. For such men and women, secession was an act of purification to escape the "pollution of decaying northern society."¹³

¹³ Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South: Ideology and Identity in the Civil War South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1990), 30.

As Faust shows, ironically, some of these beliefs led to the demise of Confederate nationalism. By proclaiming that slavery was supported by its victims, it gave slaves a voice, where before they had none. Additionally, the South had declared that capitalism had a negative effect on the North, a problematic declaration given the region's growing reliance on capitalism – especially in places like Vicksburg and Natchez. The South could not remain more “virtuous” than the North if it adopted Northern characteristics.¹⁴ Ultimately, Confederate nationalism led many citizens of Vicksburg and Natchez to fight for the Confederacy. However, it had limitations, and Natchez provides just one example.

As Gary Gallagher explains in *The Confederate War*, Faust and others' focus on the weaknesses of Confederate nationalism obscures the fact that Confederates were determined to wage war until Robert E. Lee's surrender in 1865. Confederates capitulated not because they lost the will to fight, but rather, because of the Union Army's success in late 1864 and 1865.¹⁵ Although Natchez fails to support this argument, Vicksburg serves as one example of this resiliency.

¹⁴ Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism*. See also, John McCardell, *The Idea of a Southern Nation: Southern Nationalists and Southern Nationalism, 1830-1860* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1979) and Charles S. Snyder, *The Development of Southern Sectionalism, 1831-1848, History of the South*, vol. 5 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1948). McCardell sees Confederate nationalism's genesis in the nullification crisis of the 1830s, while Snyder describes the emergence of sectionalism, where Southerners saw differences in the North and the South but were unwilling to take action. Anne Sarah Rubin's *A Shattered Nation: The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy, 1861-1868* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005) contends that McCardell's contention is too early. Instead, she argues that Southern nationalism did not exist until the emergence of the Confederacy, an actual nation. Rather until that point, there were sectionalists in the South.

¹⁵ Gary W. Gallagher, *The Confederate War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999). Building on this argument, Jason Phillips' *Diehard Rebels* focuses on the soldiers who stubbornly resisted the Union throughout this period, arguing that their expectations of a Confederate victory sustained them. See, Jason Phillips, *Diehard Rebels: The Confederate Culture of Invincibility* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010).

With the Anaconda Plan, the Union's early strategy for defeating the Confederacy, the Union sought to isolate the Southern states from the world and to split the Confederacy in two by gaining control of the Mississippi River. Union control of the river would separate the states in the Southeast from Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas, hurting the South's supply lines, military strategies, and morale. Vicksburg quickly became a major objective, with President Abraham Lincoln himself claiming the Confederacy would be able to defy the Union at Vicksburg even if every other river port belonged to the Union. As one of the most strategic points on the river, the South's "Gibraltar of the Confederacy" was vital.¹⁶

Seeking control of the river, the Union Army captured New Orleans, Louisiana on April 26, 1862. From there, Union ironclads under the command of Admiral David G. Farragut began making their way towards Vicksburg. Natchez sat along that path. Offering no resistance, the city surrendered within a month of the capture of New Orleans, and it escaped the devastation and hardships of many other Southern cities, including Vicksburg.¹⁷ As this thesis will demonstrate, because Natchez's citizens were more locally oriented and less supportive of Confederate nationalism, they did not attempt to impede the Union's progress toward Vicksburg. The Confederacy had failed to defend its interests.

In contrast, when the ironclads reached the "City on a Hill," Vicksburg did not quickly surrender. Instead, the Union Army was forced to embark on a long campaign to

¹⁶ Jerry Korn, *War on the Mississippi: Grant's Vicksburg Campaign* (Alexandria, VA: Time Life Books Incorporated, 1985); Phillip A.B. Leonard, "Forty Seven Days," *Civil War Times Illustrated* 39, no. 4 (2000): 40; and Ballard, *Vicksburg*.

¹⁷ As Susan Thorsten Falck explains, today, tourists can visit more antebellum homes in Natchez than in almost any other area in the South because of this early surrender, see Susan Thorsten Falck, "The Garden Club Women of Natchez: 'To Preserve the South We Love'" (master's thesis, California State University, 2003); Korn, *War on the Mississippi*; and Ballard, *Vicksburg*.

take the city. The Army's initial approaches failed in 1862, and not until May 18, 1863, did Union ground troops, under the command of General Ulysses S. Grant, begin assaulting the city itself. At the same time, ironclads shelled the city from the river, and Vicksburg was completely surrounded. After attempting and failing two major assaults, the Union Army began a siege of the city that kept the Confederate troops and civilian population completely isolated and subjected them to tremendous hardships. Already plagued by disease and a diminishing food supply, many civilians chose to flee the shells by building caves in the bluffs. Eventually, starving civilians and military personnel resorted to eating dogs, cats, and horses. Still, the city and its civilians refused to yield. Only after forty-seven days of siege, on July 4, 1863, did Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton surrender.¹⁸ Vicksburg resisted the Union even when resistance meant the mass destruction of city property.

Vicksburg and Natchez, despite their similarities, were vastly different. This thesis argues that most civilians in Vicksburg supported the Confederacy in defending the city at all costs because they believed the city was crucial to the South's success. They were willing to risk their own well-being for the Confederacy. Natchez, rather than attempt to slow the Union advance, surrendered with little resistance to protect itself and its citizens.¹⁹ This action proves that at least for Natchez, Confederate nationalism had its limits.

As statistics on citizens' birth places, marital status, and socio-economic status will show, one of the primary reasons for this difference was that communal ties strongly

¹⁸ Ballard, *Vicksburg*; Korn, *War on the Mississippi*; and Gordon A. Cotton and Jeff T. Giambrone, *Vicksburg and the War* (Gretna: Pelican Publishing Company, 2004).

¹⁹ Some civilians of Natchez did continue to resist the Union Army after the city's surrender, but the city as a whole acted to protect the city's well-being.

linked Natchez citizens to each other and to the North before the war. New to the area, many Vicksburg civilians were less likely to feel attached to the city itself or to their neighbors, yet the fact that many of them had grown up in the South and were committed to slavery meant that their allegiance was to that region. Civilians who were settled in the area, however, tended to be more individualistic than communally oriented, and they were less directly tied to the plantation economy than people in Natchez. Vicksburgians needed to maintain strong trade networks. Vicksburg men and women saw their individual interests as best protected by the South and its success, while Natchez's families committed themselves to the prosperity of their plantations and to each other. They could not risk their homes and lands for the Confederate nation, especially when it was unable to protect them and their property.

This work's main contribution to Civil War historiography lies in the connections it draws between Confederate nationalism and individual communities. It builds on four crucial works in this debate. In *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism*, Drew Gilpin Faust addresses skepticism in the historical community over the existence of Confederate nationalism during the Civil War. She effectively argues for its existence but shows that Confederate nationalism unintentionally empowered both poor whites and black slaves while directing attention to the internal contradictions of the South and the war effort. In effect, the war destroyed the ideology.²⁰ Gary Gallagher, in contrast, points to the Confederacy's steadfast commitment to the war effort, arguing that the key to understanding the war is not in why the South lost but that it was able to sustain the war

²⁰ Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism*. See also, Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004) for a discussion of how women in particular gradually gave up the struggle and undermined wartime morale.

effort through 1865. As he explains, the South kept fighting because of the persistence of Confederate nationalism, as well as Robert E. Lee's military successes in Virginia.²¹

Anne Rubin's *A Shattered Nation* builds on Gallagher's argument and describes the existence of this ideology long after the South surrendered. For Rubin, acting in ways that damaged the Confederate effort did not necessarily signify the death of Confederate nationalism for an individual. Sometimes, protecting their families left individuals no choice but to hurt the war effort, but they remained loyal to the Confederacy.²² Rubin, Gallagher, and Faust's successful attempts to show that Confederate nationalism existed are crucial to this project's conclusions about Vicksburg. Rubin's assessment of these, at times, conflicting loyalties is also central to the following thesis about the citizens of both Vicksburg and Natchez, as is her conclusion about the persistence of Confederate nationalism.

More recently, Stephanie McCurry's work offers a new perspective by analyzing letters and petitions sent to state officials by Southern women. In *Confederate Reckoning*, she shows that the effects of hunger and suffering during the war led women to demand assistance from the Confederate government. Ultimately, their efforts and those of slaves who revolted against their masters undermined the war effort and proved that Confederate ideology, despite its existence, was weak.²³ McCurry, like this work's analysis of Natchez, shows that although Confederate nationalism existed and even thrived in parts of the South, it still had its weaknesses.

²¹ Gallagher, *The Confederate War*.

²² Rubin, *A Shattered Nation*. See also, Gallagher, *The Confederate War*.

²³ Stephanie McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning: Power and Politics in the Civil War South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010).

Also important to this debate are the works of both Emory Thomas and George Rable. Thomas' classic study, *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience* played a crucial role in initiating this debate, as he contends that Southerners sought to defend their way of life during the war.²⁴ Rable's *The Confederate Republic* argues that the Southern elite created a new political culture that prevented the rise of political parties, which both they and their lower class counterparts saw as signs of disunity and governmental corruption. This political ideology of unity proved effective and persisted into Reconstruction.²⁵

The following study demonstrates that questions over the existence of Confederate nationalism are complex.²⁶ As Rubin contends, individuals might have multiple loyalties, some of which inevitably came into conflict. With connections to all three places, the citizens of Natchez had to choose between their homes and the city, Mississippi and the South, and the Union. In this case, they chose their homes, the city, and the Union. In contrast, Vicksburg civilians chose the South. In effect, this work shows that Confederate nationalism was both strong and weak, depending on the locale and an individual's pre-war experiences.

²⁴ Emory M. Thomas. *The Confederacy as a Revolutionary Experience* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1971).

²⁵ George C. Rable. *The Confederate Republic: A Revolution Against Politics* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994). For other works debating Confederate nationalism, see, Lesley J. Gordon and John C. Inscoe, eds., *Inside the Confederate Nation: Essays in Honor of Emory M. Thomas* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007); Paul Quigley, *Shifting Grounds: Nationalism and the American South, 1848-1865* (Oxford University Press, 2011); Bradley R. Clampitt, *The Confederate Heartland: Military and Civilian Morale in the Western Confederacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011); Gabor S. Boritt, ed., *Why the Confederacy Lost* (Oxford University Press, 1993); Mark A. Weitz, *More Damning than Slaughter: Desertion in the Confederate Army* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005); and Paul D. Escott, *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978).

²⁶ Gary Gallagher's *The Confederate War* argues that historians should address the reasons the Confederacy was able to continue fighting through Appomattox, rather than why it was unable to win the war. He points to Robert E. Lee and the Army of Northern Virginia as the focal point of Confederate nationalism. This study seeks to understand why some Southerners, in this case Vicksburgians, were so determined to continue fighting and why others, like those in Natchez, were not.

To understand these differences between various parts of the state, this work also attempts to bridge the gap between studies of Natchez and Vicksburg during the antebellum period and studies of the cities during the war. Of particular importance for this thesis are Clayton D. James' *Antebellum Natchez* and Christopher Morris' *Becoming Southern: The Evolution of a Way of Life, Warren County and Vicksburg, Mississippi 1770-1860*. Both scholars trace the cities' growth from initial settlement to reactions to secession in 1860. Their scholarship highlights the successful struggle of these two locales as they transitioned from backcountry settlements into burgeoning centers of trade. However, despite the breadth and effectiveness of the two books, neither James nor Morris address the ways these experiences shaped the cities' reactions to war beyond their resistance to secession.²⁷

In addition to debating the significance of the Union defeat of Vicksburg, historians like Michael Ballard in *Vicksburg* and Jerry Korn in *War on the Mississippi* describe the campaign for Vicksburg and show the strategies and tactics used by Union and Confederate leaders to capture or defend the city.²⁸ Ballard provides a detailed discussion of the military campaign and goes beyond his predecessors in analyzing both the military and human aspects of the battle. He convincingly argues that the city's collapse was crucial to the Union's victory over the Confederacy.²⁹ Other historians, like Gordon Cotton and Jeff Giambrone in *Vicksburg and the War*, focus on Vicksburg during the siege, its effect on civilians, and civilian responses to Union occupation of the city after the surrender.³⁰ Ultimately, however, these studies do not link the city's pre-war

²⁷ James, *Antebellum Natchez*, and Morris, *Becoming Southern*.

²⁸ Ballard, *Vicksburg*, and Korn, *War on the Mississippi*.

²⁹ Ballard, *Vicksburg*.

³⁰ Cotton and Jeff Giambrone, *Vicksburg and the War*.

experiences to its reactions during the war. Rather, most historians attribute Vicksburg's struggle to its strategic importance and strong Confederate nationalism.

One way to understand the reasons for Vicksburg's steadfast resistance to the Union advance is to compare it and its civilians to another city, particularly one that did not resist as stubbornly, like Natchez. Fewer historians have studied Natchez during the Civil War. Vicksburg, unlike Natchez, was the scene of a major battle, and its collapse was one of the most significant moments in the war. One work that does study Civil War-era Natchez, Michael Wayne's *The Reshaping of Plantation Society*, uses the city as a case study to understand economic changes after the war. It shows that the elite were able to maintain control of the social and political life in the city.³¹ Wayne's goal is not, however, to address how the city responded to war. Most other historians who study the city during this period, like Leslie Smithers in "Profit and Corruption in Civil War Natchez," tend to focus on Union occupation of the city and the effects of that occupation on civilian life.³² After all, the city surrendered in 1862, and Union troops occupied the city for much of the war. However, few studies analyze the reasons Natchez surrendered so quickly. Comparing Natchez to Vicksburg offers an opportunity to explain the differences between the two areas and their civilians, and it fills a void in the historiography on the reasons for surrendering to or resisting the Union advance.

Ultimately, by focusing almost exclusively on either the pre-war, war-time, and even post-war experiences of Southerners, James, Morris, Ballard, and other historians have left a gap in the historiography. The following thesis builds on their work and seeks to fill that gap by linking pre-war experiences to the various loyalties civilians held when

³¹ Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society*.

³² Smithers, "Profit and Corruption in Civil War Natchez."

war erupted in 1861. Such an approach offers an opportunity to understand the dynamics between and the limitations of those loyalties, while attempting to explain two cities' reactions to the advance of the Union Army in Mississippi.

Another important historiography for this thesis is the scholarship on the effects of the Civil War on Mississippi in general. Michael Ballard's *Civil War Mississippi: A Guide* and Ben Wynne's *Mississippi's Civil War* provide useful narratives of military and political events in the state.³³ In *Mississippi in the Civil War*, Timothy Smith describes the state's efforts to combat war militarily, politically, economically, and socially. He shows that most of the state's civilians had the will to win the war. However, events in 1863, like the collapse of Vicksburg, convinced civilians that the state could no longer protect their interests. In effect, civilian and military morale crumbled. Through his work, Smith is also able to address an aspect of the war often neglected by earlier historians: he describes the home front and the roles of women and blacks in Civil War Mississippi.³⁴

However, by studying the state in general, both Wynne and Smith miss the nuances that separated groups of Mississippians. Natchez and Vicksburg civilians, even within the same class, were very different. In Natchez, those limitations arose in 1862, a year before other civilians lost the will to fight, as Smith argues. By comparing Vicksburg and Natchez, this thesis identifies these regional differences and the dynamic between a civilian's commitment to his community, his state, and the Confederacy that broader approaches are less able to identify. Thus, this thesis seeks to address questions

³³ Michael B. Ballard, *Civil War Mississippi: A Guide* (Oxford: University of Mississippi, 2000) and Ben Wynne, *Mississippi's Civil War: A Narrative History* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006).

³⁴ Timothy B. Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War: The Home Front* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2010).

of Confederate nationalism, the dynamic between nationalism and localism, and the role of the community in civilian decisions to surrender, while adding to the historiography of both Natchez and Vicksburg during the Civil War.

This thesis also enters the important field of the history of poor whites and yeomen in the antebellum South. Charles C. Bolton's *Poor Whites of the Antebellum South* is particularly important to this debate, as he addresses poor whites who moved west seeking cheap land. As he explains in his section on northeast Mississippi, less than 10 percent of whites found prosperity when they moved, and most kept moving – a trend this study of Vicksburg supports.³⁵ Vicksburg was the next stop for many of these migrants.

Also particularly relevant to this study are Bill Cecil-Fronsman's *Common Whites*, Orville Vernon Burton's *In My Father's House Are Many Mansions*, and Robert C. Kenzer's *Kinship and Neighborhood in a Southern Community*.³⁶ Cecil Fronsman's work focuses on North Carolina and argues that 90 percent of the men and women who lived in the state shared a common folk culture that stressed their position as ordinary whites, and they were devoted to economic independence and a commitment to their local communities.³⁷ This argument fits the trend for both Natchezians and Vicksburgians, although most Vicksburgians' transience precluded a strong commitment

³⁵ See, Charles C. Bolton, *Poor Whites of the Antebellum South: Tenants and Laborers in Central North Carolina and Northeast Mississippi* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994). Bolton also argues that they also failed to form secure connections to common antebellum white culture because they were unable to establish the kinship and religious ties characteristic of most yeomen. Although Vicksburgians also appear fairly isolated, I argue they were committed to their one enduring link – their commitment to the South.

³⁶ Bill Cecil-Fronsman, *Common Whites: Class and Culture in Antebellum North Carolina* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992); Orville Vernon Burton, *In My Father's House Are Many Mansions: Family and Community in Edgefield, South Carolina 1848-1889* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1985); and Robert C. Kenzer, *Kinship and Neighborhood in a Southern Community: Orange County, North Carolina, 1849-1881* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1987).

³⁷ Cecil-Fronsman, *Common Whites*.

to the locale. This thesis also differs on one other important point by arguing that the common folk *and* their elite counterparts shared a commitment to specific elements of Southern culture, including slavery and economic self-sufficiency. Burton and Kenzer's works also stress this cross-class commitment by stressing familial, religious, and social ties.³⁸ Bradley Bond's *Political Culture in the Nineteenth-Century South* also stresses this commitment to both independence and market production for all whites in Mississippi. All Mississippi whites, including nonslaveholders, embraced capitalism.³⁹ Also vital is Stephanie McCurry's approach to yeomanry in *Masters of Small Worlds* which demonstrates that white men of all classes relied on the dependency of both slaves and – particularly for yeomen farmers – their wives.⁴⁰

Methodologically, this study engages with a long history of community studies in American historiography. From the beginning, many scholars utilizing this method have viewed local issues and cultural similarities as bonding the citizens of towns and cities into a single community. However, some scholars have come to this conclusion without effectively proving the locals associated with each other through communal relationships. As Thomas Bender explains in *Community and Social Change in America*, such a view stems mostly from studies of the colonial period, like Kenneth Lockridge's *A New England Town*, which describes the creation of a community in Dedham, Massachusetts.

³⁸ See, Burton, *In My Father's House Are Many Mansions* and Kenzer, *Kinship and Neighborhood in a Southern Community*. For other works engaging this debate, see Steven Hahn's *Roots of Southern Populism: Yeomen Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Lacy K. Ford Jr., *Origins of Southern Radicalism: The South Carolina Upcountry, 1800-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); and Robert Tracy McKenzie's *One South or Many? Plantation Belt and Upcountry in Civil-War Era Tennessee* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

³⁹ See, Bradley G. Bond, *Political Culture in the Nineteenth-Century South: Mississippi, 1830-1900* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995).

⁴⁰ Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

There, the town constituted a community.⁴¹ In part basing their idea of the community on the colonial experience, some historians assume that antebellum towns, just prior to the Civil War, were communities. However, as Bender explains, antebellum America was different from the colonial period both socially and culturally. Antebellum towns did not immediately cement communal formation, as more geographic proximity did not always encompass the connections and ties that truly bonded people. In other words, territorial interaction only acted as one identifier of a community, but it was not the only one.⁴²

The following study follows Bender's suggestion by viewing shared experiences as the defining characteristic of a community, rather than the geography.⁴³ Peter Silver's *Our Savage Neighbors* provides an example of the ways shared experiences have united diverse peoples. The book describes Pennsylvania's founding years as ones comprising a culturally-divided white population. Not even religion or language united the various groups. However, in the 1750s the locals' perceptions of Native American violence led them to create an "anti-Indian sublime" that united them in hatred and fear of Indians. Through that ideology of Indian violence, the diverse colonial groups began to refer to themselves as *white people*. Thus, fear and hatred, through the experience and rhetoric of Native American violence, united the whites of Pennsylvania into a community.⁴⁴

During the antebellum period, it is clear that the community transcended geography alone. Anthony Kaye's *Joining Places* shows that the slave community of

⁴¹ Thomas Bender, *Community and Social Change in America* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978) and Kenneth A. Lockridge, *A New England Town: The First Hundred Years: Dedham, Massachusetts, 1636-1736*, Expanded ed. (New York: Norton, 1985).

⁴² For a more in-depth discussion of this trend in the historiography, see Darrett B. Rutman and Anita H. Rutman, *Small Worlds, Large Questions: Explorations in Early American Social History, 1600-1850* (Charlottesville, VA: University of Virginia Press, 1994) and Thomas Bender, *Community and Social Change in America* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

⁴³ Bender, *Community and Social Change*.

⁴⁴ Peter Silver, *Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America* (New York: Norton, 2008), xx.

Natchez, Mississippi developed neighborhoods that crossed plantation lines, did not always include every slave on a plantation, and could even include members of the white population. Overlapping ties of kinship and labor, as well as mutual experiences, united various groups of slaves within Natchez.⁴⁵ In effect, Kaye's study demonstrates that even identifying race alone as a community can be misleading.

In *Guarding Greensboro*, G. Ward Hubbs shows that community formation was not always immediate or automatic. Providing one of the few studies that attempt to link pre-war experiences to events and reactions during the Civil War, Hubbs argues that Greensboro, Alabama had been marked by individual self-interest during the antebellum period. The civilians had failed to create local institutions that could unite their interests and forge a community, as they were more interested in their own prosperity. Only one institution, the Greensboro Guards, had the power to unite the locals. It emerged to protect whites from Native American raids, slave insurrections, and eventually, invading Yankees. Hence, it was the only institution in Greensboro that was completely selfless. Hubbs argues that the war and the sense of mutual sacrifice that emerged through the Guards' role in fighting for the Confederacy forged a true community in Greensboro.⁴⁶ Hubbs' compelling analysis of the ways community formed during the Civil War, and his success in linking antebellum experiences to the war, are crucial models for this thesis, as its aim is to understand how the antebellum period influenced the reactions of both Natchez and Vicksburg, Mississippi during the war. Although less institutionally focused than his study, in many ways, *Guarding Greensboro* is the model for this work.

⁴⁵ Anthony Kaye resists the notion that the slave population constituted one community. In effect, he uses the term "neighborhood" to describe the "community." I reference in my study, one based on mutual interest. See, Kaye, *Joining Places*.

⁴⁶ G. Ward Hubbs, *Guarding Greensboro: A Confederate Company in the Making of a Southern Community* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2003).

Although both cities were home to a large population of African American slaves and even a small population of free blacks, the focus of this thesis is on white Southerners who lived in or near the cities when war erupted, as they were more likely to support the Confederacy. This work uses both quantitative and qualitative research, and the most important sources for developing the former are the U.S. Census Records of Vicksburg and Natchez in 1860, which provided the data for a number of charts portraying the birth places, regional connections, socio-economic statuses, ages, and occupations of residents of both cities in order to explain responses to the war and to the Union advance. The first chapter, which focuses on Vicksburg, and the second chapter, which focuses on Natchez, emphasizes this data and demonstrates the pre-war connections that influenced the acceptance or rejection of Confederate nationalism. Both chapters focus on the period of 1860 to 1863. 1863 is important because it is when Vicksburg surrendered. Union occupation of the city marked a new stage in the war, and with such crucial new circumstances, Vicksburgian and Natchezian perspectives on the war inevitably shifted. Union occupation of Vicksburg and Natchez is beyond the scope of this thesis. Instead, the final chapter addresses how these cities remembered the war and demonstrates that both embraced and helped create the myth of the Lost Cause.

Newspaper articles, as well as letters and diaries of both civilians and soldiers from the cities, supplement the data in the first two chapters and inform the final chapter, which shows that the South's surrender and each city's memory of the war led Natchez to fully embrace Southern ideology for the first time, while Vicksburg attempted to both justify its actions during the war and reinstate itself as part of the newly reconciled

nation.⁴⁷ Of course, as home to a high percentage of poor whites (including large numbers of foreign immigrants) illiteracy rates appeared higher in Vicksburg than in Natchez, leaving fewer written sources for this group than for the latter. However, enough letters and diaries exist for these conclusions to remain persuasive, and the connections shown through the U.S. Census Records help alleviate questions of representation.

For the purposes of this study, written sources of Warren, Hinds, and Yazoo County residents inform the research on Vicksburg, and sources written by the residents of Adams, Jefferson, and Franklin County inform research on Natchez. Each of these counties was immediately adjacent to or housed the city under study, and comparisons of the two groups are striking, as written records of those who lived near or within Vicksburg reflected a determination to fight for the South and the almost total acceptance of Confederate nationalism. In contrast, most sources for Natchez reflected an interest in the local area and in the city's economic interests. Interest in the war and its effects on the Confederate war effort appeared far less frequently than within the Vicksburg group.

Using these sources, this thesis argues that Mississippians' reactions to secession and war within Natchez and Vicksburg were extremely complex. As this research shows, pre-war experiences led Vicksburg civilians to embrace Confederate nationalism, while their Natchez counterparts rejected it, choosing to privilege their city and national trade networks instead. When the war ended, however, civilians of both cities sought to justify the war and celebrate their contributions, embracing the quickly emerging myth of the Lost Cause.

⁴⁷ This study views soldiers as members of the areas where they enlisted, as many of their families remained in the counties, and their motivations for enlisting originated within their home communities.

CHAPTER II

‘GIVE ME LIBERTY OR GIVE ME DEATH:’ VICKSBURG RESPONDS TO
SECESSION

On February 16, 1863, Edwin Herring captured the proclivities of many Vicksburgians when he explained, “I am quite astonished at Mr. Frelin wishing to procure a substitute as he always has been one of the hottest secessionist that could be found anywhere. I have heard him assert several times that he could whip ten Yankees any time. I am afraid that if the fate of the country were left to such men as he that we would be found wanting.”⁴⁸ His comment is representative of the dozens of letters, diaries, and newspapers from Vicksburg that are key to this project’s argument. Despite their resistance to secession, once Mississippi decided to act, the citizens of Vicksburg embraced Confederate nationalism and their new nation. They believed they were defending the South against a tyrannical North, a cause that for them, unlike for their counterparts in places like Natchez, trumped any loyalty they felt to the city of Vicksburg. Vicksburg men and their families were Southerners, and that connection was paramount: it made any cost worth their sacrifices.

There is no doubt, pre-war connections influenced how communities embraced Confederate nationalism. As historian Anne Rubin contends in *A Shattered Nation*, individuals could have multiple loyalties, some of which inevitably came into conflict. While many citizens of Vicksburg had trade connections to the North, they also had loyalties to Mississippi, the institution of slavery, or the South in general.⁴⁹ These factors

⁴⁸ Edwin Herring to his wife, Mary Emma Griffing Herring, February 16, 1863, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, Mississippi.

⁴⁹ For more on Vicksburg’s trade connections to the North, see Morris, *Becoming Southern*.

influenced the decisions of both civilians and soldiers to support or reject the new Confederate Nation.

By 1860, Vicksburg's white population had reached 4,841, making it the second largest city in the state after Natchez.⁵⁰ In contrast to most of Mississippi, which averaged a foreign-born population of 6 percent, 17 percent of Vicksburg's population was foreign born.⁵¹ Although some 1860 Vicksburgians were established residents, most of this population was new to the area. Seventy-four percent of them were born in the South, of which 84 percent was born in Mississippi. Many of these *native-born* Mississippians, however, were children (see Figures 1 and 2). When limited to Mississippi-born men between the ages of fifteen and forty-five, this drops to 45 percent, with only 37 percent of these men even born in a slave state (see Figures 3 and 4). Thus, when building loyalties, it's significant to note that the majority of Vicksburg men were not even from Mississippi, let alone the city of Vicksburg.

⁵⁰The following numbers and percentages are based on data compiled using the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. Natchez's white population had reached 5,658 by 1860.

⁵¹ See, Morris, *Becoming Southern* and U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

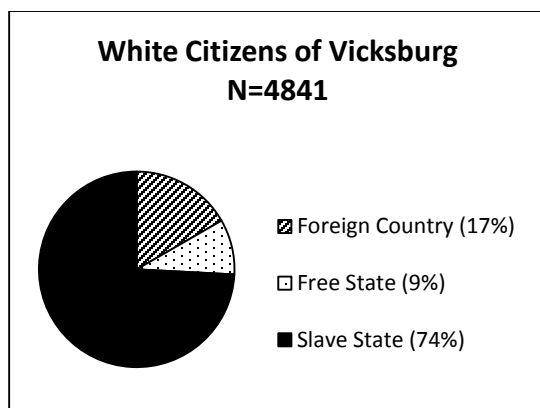


Figure 1. Birthplaces of Vicksburgians.⁵²

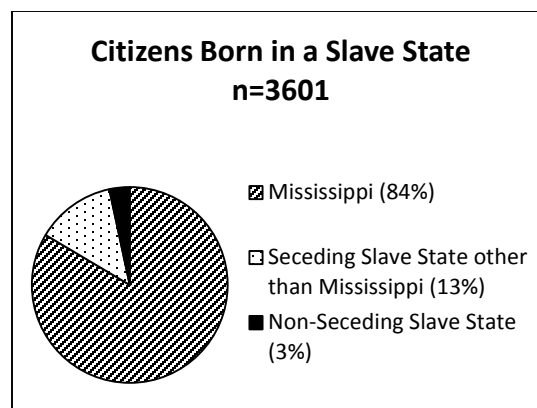


Figure 2. Breakdown of Slave State Births.

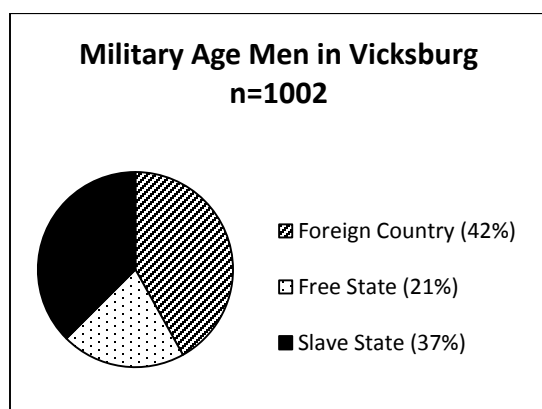


Figure 3. Birthplaces of Vicksburg Military Age Men.⁵³

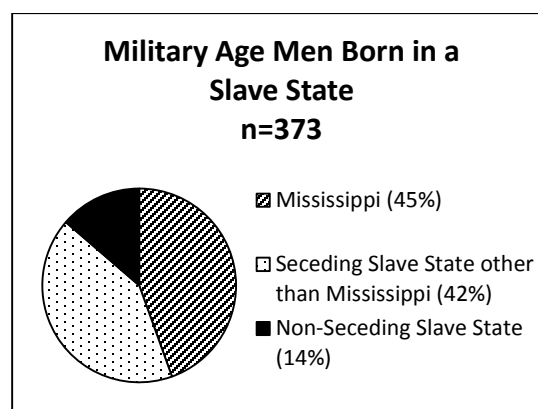


Figure 4. Birthplaces of Vicksburg Military Age Men Born in a Slave State.

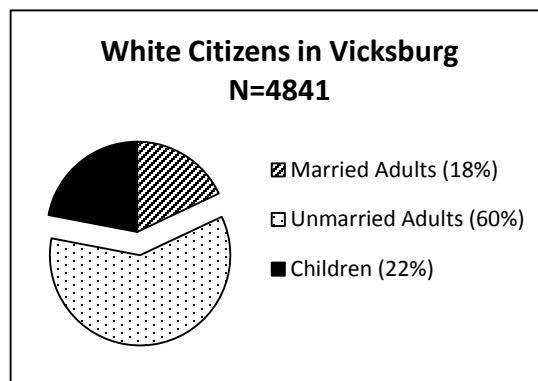
As these percentages show, few families were well-established in Vicksburg by 1860. A number of factors emphasize this point. At least twenty-five boarding houses existed within the city, as opposed to the city of Natchez, which only had nine (and four hotels).⁵⁴ This contrast demonstrates the transient nature of many of Vicksburg's citizens.

⁵² The term "slave state" in Figure 1 and all subsequent Figures includes all states where slavery was legal in 1860, as when many of these men chose to enlist, the chances that border states, including Kentucky and Maryland, would also secede were still high. Additionally, all of these states connected the people within them to slavery and other Southern values, which shaped their decisions to support the Confederacy. Numbers also reference only the white population, as already discussed in the introduction.

⁵³ For the purposes of this thesis, military age men are considered those between the ages of fifteen and forty-five.

⁵⁴ Based on the boarding houses listed on the census records for both Vicksburg and Natchez. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

Making this transience easier, of course, was the fact that 60 percent of Vicksburgians were unmarried adults (see Figure 5).⁵⁵ Vicksburg's civilians were overwhelmingly single and new to the city; without a long-term connection to the community, many residents were more attached to their one enduring link, their bond with the South.



*Figure 5. Marriage Rates in Vicksburg.*⁵⁶

Because of the large number of transients and because Vicksburg lacked the long-standing social institutions that traditionally curbed vices, gambling, drinking, and prostitution were rampant in the city. In the 1830s, established residents tried to address this by organizing a local militia, the Vicksburg Volunteers, and they even attempted a violent city-wide purge of “undesirables.” But these problems persisted throughout the 1850s, discouraging people from settling in the city. Additionally, this environment provided interaction between the local slave population and poor whites, which concerned community leaders in Vicksburg. One of their major fears was the violence that often originated in gambling dens, where white men perceived even the smallest

⁵⁵ As there were 1.4 men per every 1 woman in Vicksburg and 1.3 men per every 1 woman in Natchez, where the marriage rates were much higher, this large percentage of unmarried adults is not because too few women had settled within Vicksburg.

⁵⁶ Marriage rates based on the 1860 U.S. Bureau of the Census. For the purposes of this study, children are aged fourteen years old or younger.

slights from blacks, like a gambling loss, as threats to their honor.⁵⁷ Established community leaders, however, lacked the political influence needed to curb the transients' behavior. Ultimately, the combination of Vicksburg's commercial-orientation, its youth, and its culturally and socio-economically diverse population led its residents to be more individualistic and more interested in Southern interests and their personal commercial goals than in the city itself.

The occupations listed for Vicksburg women re-emphasize the city's shallow roots. Sixteen percent of women had an occupation listed, and given the percentage of unmarried adults and the fact that there were at least twenty-five boarding houses in the city, that number is certainly underestimated (see Figure 6).⁵⁸ Many of Vicksburg's women had to find work because there was no established family farm and they did not have the long-standing social ties to be able to work in the homes of family friends. Striking is the lack of variability in the occupations listed for these women, most of whom were limited to becoming seamstresses or servants. Some women were able to open boarding houses or work as milliners, but few found work elsewhere.⁵⁹ Occupations as teachers or governesses were not readily available in a city lacking long-standing social traditions, institutions, and established families. For example, only eight Vicksburg women became teachers.

⁵⁷ Morris, *Becoming Southern* and Rothman, "The Hazards of the Flush Times." Also emphasizing this crime rate is the fact that 5 percent of the enlisted men from Vicksburg were criminals. No confirmed criminals enlisted in Natchez. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

⁵⁸ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

⁵⁹ In contrast, fewer women listed occupations in Natchez. Those who did demonstrated that they had far more options, and very few of them became seamstresses or servants. While sixty-one Vicksburg women became seamstresses, only nine women in Natchez chose that occupation. The numbers who became servants, no less disparate, were twenty-four and six. As Chapter II will show, Natchez women, in an established community, found more occupations available to them.

A look at the city's married citizenry also serves to emphasize the city's youth. Many, if not most, of Vicksburg's leaders were married, and these men demonstrated a much greater commitment to the welfare of the city. However, these men were no more likely to have been born in the South than their unmarried counterparts. Only 34 percent were born in a slave state (see Figure 7). Their wives were only slightly less likely to have been born in a slave state, totaling 41 percent (see Figure 8).⁶⁰ Most of these men and women were only beginning to establish themselves within the city.

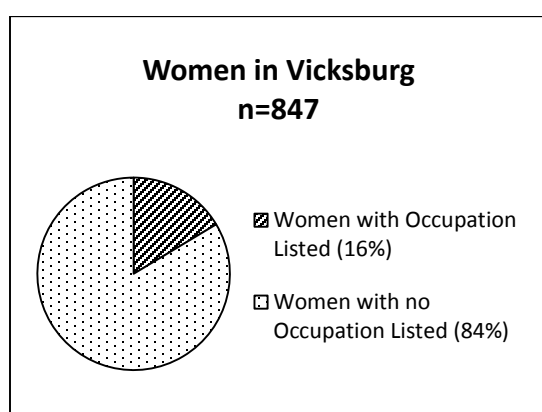


Figure 6. Women in Vicksburg with an Occupation Listed.⁶¹

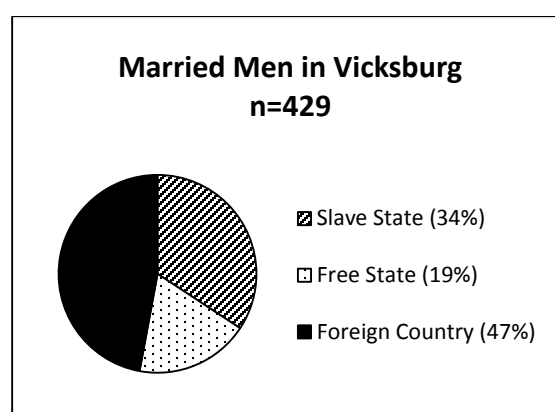


Figure 7. Birthplaces of Married Men in Vicksburg.

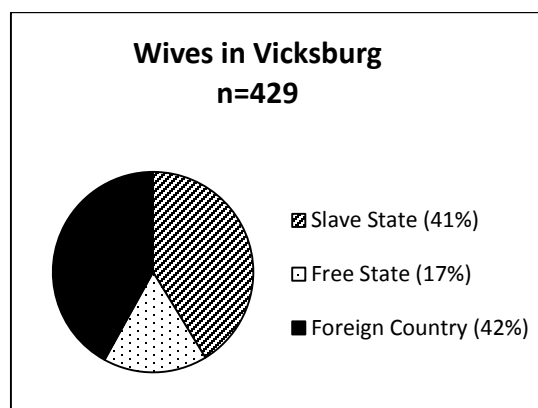


Figure 8. Birthplaces of Wives in Vicksburg.

⁶⁰ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

⁶¹ Percentages based on the U.S. Bureau of the Census. For the purposes of this study, women are considered those females aged fifteen years or older.

Vicksburg men and women knew the importance of trade, and the city was only becoming more entangled in the trade networks linking New Orleans to northern cities. For their own prosperity, Vicksburg citizens needed to maintain those networks, even if they did not feel connected to the city itself. In the 1860 Presidential election, these strong economic ties to the North led Vicksburgians to oppose secession and support the new Constitutional Union Party's Presidential candidate, John Bell. Their hope was to maintain peace between the North and the South through compromise, which, in their minds, would have preserved those crucial trade networks. In the end, this sentiment was the majority position, as 309 votes went to Bell. Close behind with 296 votes, however, was the Southern Democratic candidate, John C. Breckenridge, seen as unwilling to compromise on the issue of slavery.⁶² This vote hinted that although Vicksburg hoped to avoid secession and war, many of its residents were committed to the South and Southern ideals, particularly slavery. One civilian exemplified this sentiment when he warned the *Daily Evening Citizen* that "it now remains for us to decide whether we will live as freemen, and make Mississippi an independent state, or whether we will tamely submit to the condition of slaves."⁶³ In December of that year, however, still hoping to reach a peaceful solution over slavery, Vicksburg voted overwhelmingly against secession and sent two Unionist delegates to the state secession convention.⁶⁴ These citizens had commitments to Mississippi, the South, and slavery, as well as the North and their trade networks. Secession would mean a choice between supporting regional loyalties over economic stability and growth.⁶⁵

⁶² Morris, *Becoming Southern*.

⁶³ *Vicksburg Daily Evening Citizen*, December 1860.

⁶⁴ Morris, *Becoming Southern*.

⁶⁵ For the reasons Vicksburg was strategically important, see Ballard, *Vicksburg*.

When Mississippi seceded on January 9, 1861, the majority of Vicksburg's civilians reversed course and supported the South. With astonishing speed, many of its citizens began to see the newly formed Confederate States of America as their nation and saw it as more "American" than the Union itself. They were willing to die defending its independence, and men began to enlist, citing motivations of liberty, duty, and honor.⁶⁶ For members of the Volunteer Southrons, an explanation for this was simple, as their bylaws stated, "The corps shall always be held subservient to the civil authorities of this state."⁶⁷ They were responsible for upholding Mississippi's decision to secede. For Vicksburg men who enlisted after the state seceded, however, supporting the Confederacy became the best option for protecting their families and their own economic interests from what they perceived as a foreign, oppressive nation. These men and their families began placing the good of the Confederacy above the good of the state and even Vicksburg itself, and because of that choice many of them would endure a forty-seven day siege in 1863. A city that had been almost evenly split between Constitutional Unionists and Southern Democrats in the fall of 1860 embodied, within a matter of months, the very idea of Confederate nationalism.

One of the ways to explain this swift transition is through an examination of men from Vicksburg who enlisted in the Confederate Army. Twenty-one percent of Vicksburg's population was eligible to enlist, and only 18 percent of that number definitively enlisted (see Figure 9). At least fourteen companies, which included more

⁶⁶ Liberty, duty, and honor fit the reasons many men enlisted men cited in both the North and the South. See, McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*.

⁶⁷ *Minute Book of the Volunteer Southrons 1853 & 1875*, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

than 1000 enlisted men, organized in and around the city during the war.⁶⁸ The majority of these enlistees came from counties near the city, rather than Vicksburg itself, leaving only 180 Vicksburgians to appear on the 1860 census record of the city. Fifty-three percent of these Vicksburgian enlisted men had been born in a slave state, while only 17 percent were born in a free state. The other 30 percent were foreign-born (see Figure 10).⁶⁹ Comparing these enlistees to all of the men in Vicksburg eligible to enlist, only 15 percent of those born in free states and 13 percent of those foreign born enlisted in the Confederate Army. In contrast, 26 percent of all the Vicksburg men born in slave states enlisted. Even more likely were the men specifically born within the state of Mississippi, totaling 33 percent (see Figures 11, 12, 13, and 14). Men born and probably raised in the slave South had much stronger familial, cultural, and nostalgic reasons to join the Confederate Army.

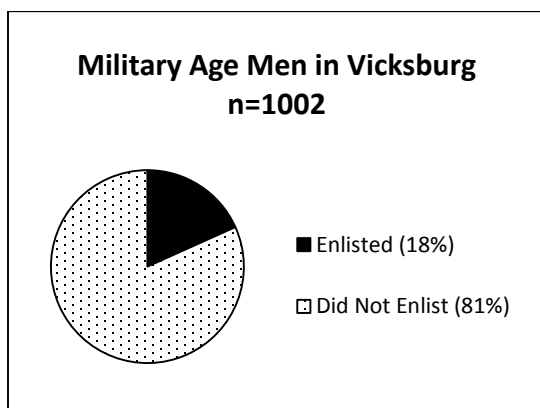


Figure 9. Military Age Men who Enlisted in Vicksburg.

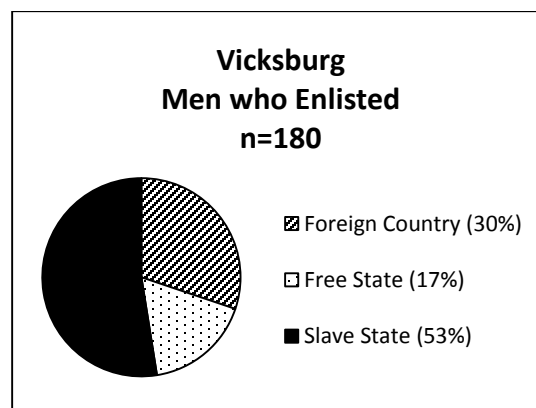


Figure 10. Birthplaces of Vicksburg Men who Enlisted.

⁶⁸ See, James Bolls, ed., *A Complete Roster of the Soldiers and Sailors of Warren County During the Civil War*, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

⁶⁹ For the purposes of this study, although Vicksburgians began to see the North as a separate country, the terms “foreign-born” or “foreign country” are references to Canada and other countries beyond North America. Note too, at least 8 percent of this 108 were illiterate, but that percentage is only slightly higher than that of Natchez’s 2 percent and is not statistically significant.

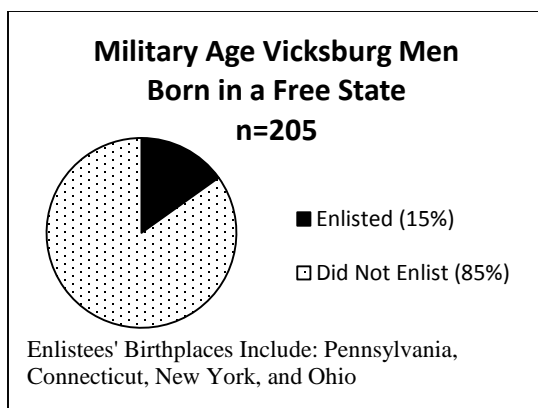


Figure 11. Men Born in a Free State who Enlisted in Vicksburg.

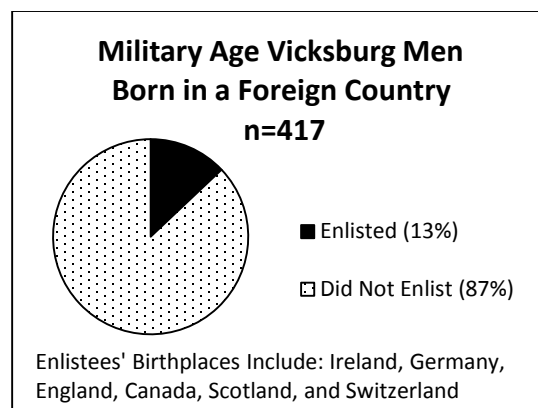


Figure 12. Men Born in a Foreign Country who Enlisted in Vicksburg.

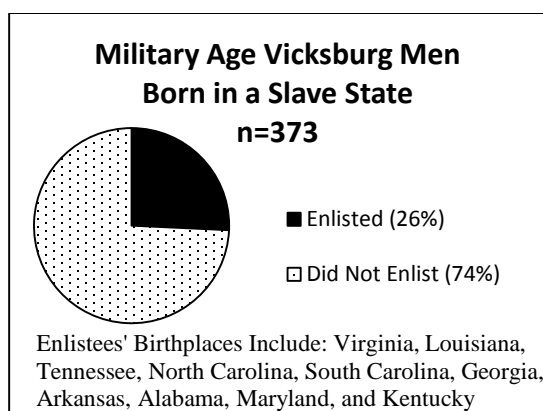


Figure 13. Men Born in a Slave State who Enlisted in Vicksburg.

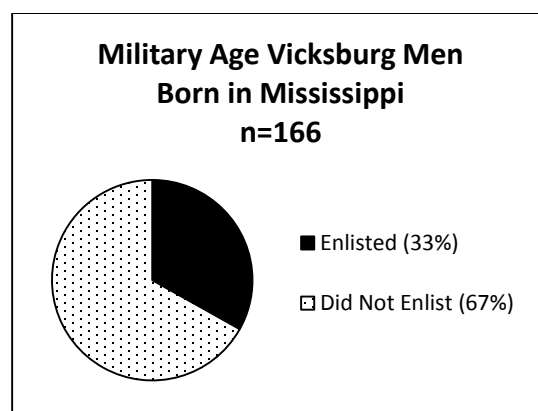


Figure 14. Men Born in Mississippi who Enlisted in Vicksburg.

These connections mattered. Each man's choice to support or not to support the South comprised a complex web of factors, including economic, cultural, and familial reasons. Men's families linked them to a specific region of the nation, if not multiple regions, which in turn connected them to regional values. A much smaller percentage of men were linked to the North than to the South through those familial associations, leaving economic connections instead. Generally, these men were linked to Southern values, trumping their association with the North. Edwin Herring exemplified the power of these familial connections. A Northerner by birth, Herring married a Southern woman, Mary Emma Griffing, during a furlough on January 4, 1863. He wrote to her later that

year, “I did not care at all for any relatives you so absorb my love. I am confident that my Mother will feel sad when she learns of my marriage thinking that I am lost to her and if she really knew how indifferent I really feel toward my relatives North she would feel sadly indeed.”⁷⁰ Herring embraced his wife’s Southern heritage, stating later, “I despise the northern people that is with a very few excepting. The ties that bind me to my Mother and sisters can never be severed as long as life last but my love for you My Darling has usurped my love for every one else.”⁷¹ Herring was clearly wrestling with these dual connections, but significantly, he chose to support the South, combatting the skepticism of at least one fellow Confederate soldier who had declared his suspicions of Northern-born Confederate soldiers.⁷²

Through Southern connections and the support of the slave institution, many Vicksburg men were quick to embrace Confederate nationalism. E. D. Cavett showed his support by quoting Jefferson Davis’ speech in Vicksburg just before the state seceded. He exclaimed, “If... Mississippi should decide to resist the tyranny that would tarnish the bright star that represents her in that galaxy, I will come at her bidding, whether by night, or by day, and gather around me a nucleus of Mississippi’s best and bravest.”⁷³ Emphasizing his commitment to the Confederacy even at his home state’s expense, Nathaniel Harris, Captain of the Warren Rifles organized in Vicksburg, argued with

⁷⁰ Edwin Herring to his wife, Mary Emma Griffing Herring, February 21, 1863, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. For couple’s wedding date, see Mary Emma Griffing Herring to Edwin Herring, January 4, 1864, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

⁷¹ Edwin Herring to his wife, Mary Emma Griffing Herring, March 6, 1863, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

⁷² Herring to his wife, Mary Emma Griffing Herring March 6, 1863. Undoubtedly, men who had married Northern women would have had similar issues, but few Vicksburg men were connected to the North in this way. Only 17 percent of married women in Vicksburg were born in the North. Plus, Vicksburg men did live in the South and were therefore more likely to meet and establish relationships with the women of that region, linking them to Southern values.

⁷³ E.D. Cavett, letters, Crutcher-Shannon Family Papers, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

Mississippi Governor John J. Pettus over rifles issued to the company in May 1861. The company received orders to report to Virginia to serve with the Army of Northern Virginia, and it planned to take its Mississippi issued rifles with it to fight for the Confederacy. When Pettus heard the news, he demanded that Harris return the company's rifles to the state. Harris disregarded the order, and the company arrived at Richmond by the thirtieth of May. Significantly, Harris' troops cheered his decision to reject Pettus' authority and send them to the front, stressing their ties to the Confederacy as a whole.⁷⁴

Many Vicksburg enlisted men had familial ties to the South that were stronger than their economic connections to the North. Sixty percent of enlistees were connected to slave states through either birth or family. In contrast, only 25 percent were connected to free states, and 41 percent were connected to a foreign country (see Figures 15, 16, and 17).⁷⁵ The fact that only 49 percent were specifically connected to Mississippi, however, shows that although a majority of these men were committed to the South because of these larger connections, that commitment did not automatically extend specifically to Mississippi (see Figure 18). When their allegiance to their 1860 home came into conflict with their allegiance to the South, they chose the South.

⁷⁴ Nathaniel H. Harris to Captain D. A. Campbell, September 6, 1895, Records of the Sixteenth Mississippi Infantry Regiment, 1861-1865, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

⁷⁵ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

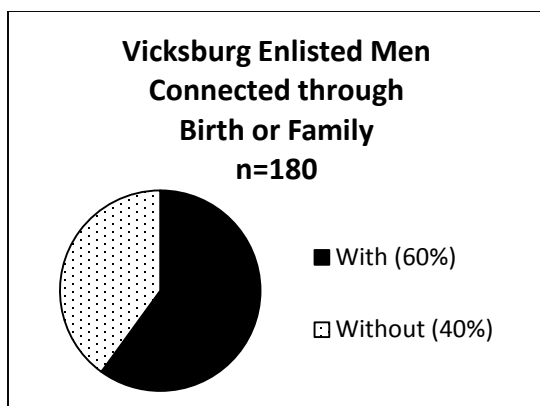


Figure 15. Vicksburg Enlisted Men Connected to Slave States.⁷⁶

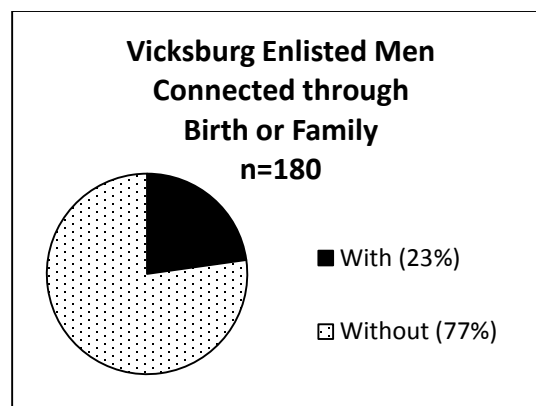


Figure 16. Vicksburg Enlisted Men Connected to Free States.

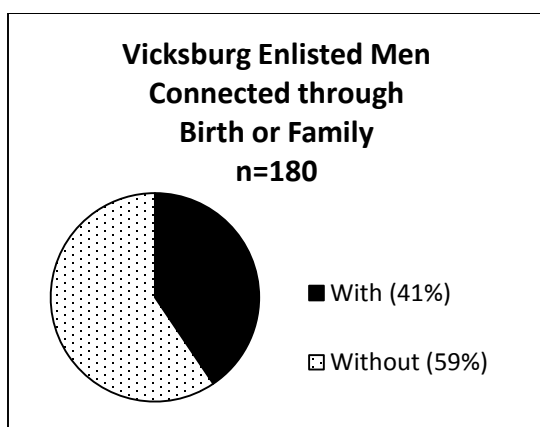


Figure 17. Vicksburg Enlisted Men Connected to Foreign Countries.

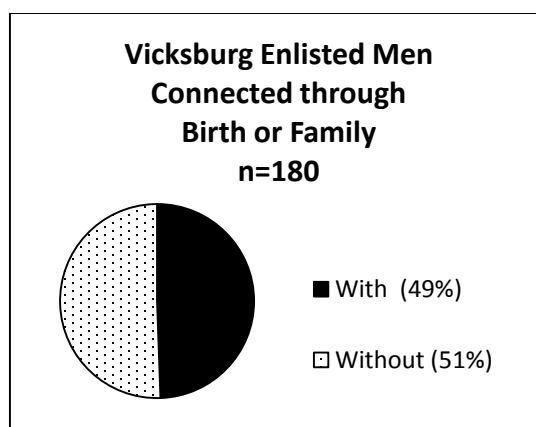


Figure 18. Vicksburg Enlisted Men Connected to Mississippi.

With this attachment to the South as a whole, many of these men paid attention to events in other states, both before and after secession. Vicksburg volunteer Nimrod Newton Nash insisted that Kentucky's attempt to remain neutral in the war was "impossible she will have to speak one way or the other."⁷⁷ Vicksburg soldiers like Nash embraced Confederate nationalism, and they certainly fit historian Timothy Smith's

⁷⁶ For the purposes of this study, the term "family" is a reference to the nuclear family. It includes parents, siblings, wives, and children. Connections are based on family members' birthplaces, based on the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

⁷⁷ Nimrod Newton Nash to his wife, Mollie Nash, May 26, 1861, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 2.

argument that Mississippians had a will to fight and believed they were fighting for independence from the United States.⁷⁸ In the summer of 1861, for example, Walter Adams explained to his mother that he and other Vicksburgians of the Volunteer Southrons “were determined to stand by their country in this her great struggle for freedom and independence.”⁷⁹ These soldiers viewed Southern society, including slavery, as superior to that of the North and saw themselves as more virtuous and, indeed, “American.”⁸⁰ Many of them were willing to give their lives for that independence. As Walter Adams explained to his mother, she need not be uneasy about his death for “I am resolved to do my duty let the consequences be what they may.”⁸¹

Vicksburg men were resolved to fight for the South, not just Mississippi. Otherwise, they would not have continued fighting after the city fell.⁸² Abner James Wilkes joined in 1862 “in the defense of [his] country.”⁸³ He remained in Vicksburg throughout the siege, and General Grant paroled him along with the many other defenders of the city in the summer of 1863. Significantly, however, Wilkes remained at home only a few days before he returned to the front. He said that “it went against the grain, thinking we were not exchanged and were violating the war regulations,” but he returned

⁷⁸ Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*.

⁷⁹ Walter Adams to his mother June 1, 1861, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

⁸⁰ See, Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism* and McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*.

⁸¹ Walter Adams to his mother July 21, 1861, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. In *For Cause and Comrades*, McPherson argues both Union and Confederate soldiers believed they were bound by duty to do their part, regardless of the consequences. Vicksburg soldiers fit this argument.

⁸² In *Mississippi in the Civil War*, Smith contends that Mississippians’ will to fight did not collapse until after the Union Army was able to march unchecked across the state. The enlisted men of Vicksburg, however, generally maintained that resolve, a product of their connection to the South, rather than Mississippi.

⁸³ Abner James Wilkes, *A Short History of My Life in the Late War Between the North and the South*, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 1.

to and remained in the Confederate Army until the war ended.⁸⁴ Edwin Herring's brother decided to enlist in late 1863, and D.C.M. Higham left his family in Vicksburg and joined in 1864. He had only been thirteen when the war began in 1861 and had started serving in the state's militia in 1863. Despite the city's defeat, these two men chose to enlist, suggesting that Vicksburg's fall may have even prompted them to join the Cause in a new and more active way.⁸⁵

Wilkes and Higham were not alone in their resolve to continue fighting after Vicksburg fell. Following the Battle of Champion Hill, one soldier wrote, "I am fearful that our house is nearly destroyed, probably burned as I saw a large smoke in that direction, but I have no regrets on that score. I have ceased to regret the loss of property."⁸⁶ This man knew Vicksburg's fall would hurt the Confederacy, but its capitulation did not discourage him from continuing to support the South's efforts. By the twenty-fifth day of the Siege, he had accepted the fact that the city would fall, and he had even accepted the loss of his home before the siege. Significantly, however, he hoped the Confederate Army would be able to fight its way out, and he wanted to continue fighting. He took solace in the words of a poem, "You will descend from a position of affluence to one of poverty – yet – take courage."⁸⁷ Edwin Herring believed

⁸⁴ Wilkes, *A Short History*, 6. See, Kenneth Noe, *Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates Who Joined the Army after 1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010). Noe argues that later enlistees joined the Confederate Army to defend their homes from what they saw as an invading Union Army, and they were less ideologically motivated than their 1861 counterparts. While the men who enlisted in Natchez fit this description as early as 1861, a topic I discuss in my next chapter, generally Vicksburg men are an exception to this argument. Their lack of commitment to the city led them to fight for more ideological reasons. No matter their enlistment date, these men clearly viewed the South as a separate nation and believed it was more "American" than the Union.

⁸⁵ Edwin Herring to his brother, December 1, 1863 and D. C. M. Higham, *Personal Reminiscences of the Civil War*, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

⁸⁶ Letter to Mrs. M. M. Champion, May 18, 1863, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. The author's name has been lost from his letters, but he described his home near Vicksburg.

⁸⁷ Letter to Mrs. M.M. Champion, June 25, 1863, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

that if the city fell, “the best thing the planters could do would be to run their negroes to some other state.”⁸⁸ He believed Mississippi would be devastated, but he was not convinced the rest of the South would follow. F. M. Ross wrote to his sister in Vicksburg to inform her that her husband had perished in battle, but he also promised he would try to get a furlough to visit her. As he explained, however, Vicksburg’s fall was a hindrance to his ability to get one, but he saw it as God’s will and insisted, “therefore we must not grumble.”⁸⁹ Ross, like many other Vicksburg men, continued to fight for the South long after their home community was no longer part of the Confederacy.

As historians James McPherson, Steven Woodworth, and George Rable have shown, one reason these men were able to continue after the city’s fall was their Christian faith.⁹⁰ Vicksburg soldiers, like their counterparts in Natchez and throughout the South, saw themselves as more religious than Union soldiers. These men believed God had supported a virtuous, purifying cause in their secession, and their letters were filled with affirmations of the Lord’s support for the South.⁹¹ Soldiers proclaimed that because the South’s cause was just and God was on its side, their lives were in the Lord’s hands. For these men, they were doing their duty not only to their country but also to God. As Herring explained in late 1863, “If those who have previous to this time entered the service of their country have required a strong faith and unflinching purpose on her cause

⁸⁸ Edwin Herring to his wife, Mary Emma Griffing. Herring, May 16, 1863, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 1.

⁸⁹ F. M. Ross to his sister, Mollie Nash, July 14, 1863, Nimrod Newton Nash Letters, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 1.

⁹⁰ McPherson’s *For Cause and Comrades* also discusses religion and contends that men used religion to cope with the stress of combat. I contend that Vicksburg soldiers also used it to cope with news of the city’s collapse. See also, Steven E. Woodworth, *While God Is Marching on: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2001) and George Rable, *God’s Almost Chosen Peoples: A Religious History of the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

⁹¹ See, Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism*. For a discussion of both Northern and Southern soldiers’ beliefs that God was on *their* side, see McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*.

how much more do you at this hour require it. . . If any class of men need more than any other to be Christians it is the soldier.”⁹² Herring did not believe God had abandoned the South’s cause; rather, soldiers needed to have faith in His support, even in the face of the city’s defeat.⁹³

Admittedly, some of the disparity in the percentages of men born in the North or the South who enlisted may be a product of age. Men aged twenty to twenty-four were overrepresented at 28 percent in the age-breakdown of enlisted men of Vicksburg (see Table 1). Fifty-nine percent of this group had been born in a slave state. Each of the next age groups was decreasingly likely to have been born in a slave state. Even more striking is the fact that 68 percent of the enlistees aged twenty-four and under were born in slave states.⁹⁴ Ultimately, younger men were more likely to enlist and were more likely to have been born in a slave state, making enlistees more likely to have been born in the slave South.

⁹² Herring to his brother, December, 1, 1863.

⁹³ Herring was not alone in placing significance on a soldier’s decision to continue trusting the Lord. See, George Albert Grammer diary, May 1, 1863, quoted in “With Rebel Army – Civil War Diary of Vicksburger,” *Vicksburg Evening Post*, June 14, 1963.

⁹⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. The youngest enlisted men were fourteen in 1860. Both were born in slave states. The oldest enlisted men were between the ages of fifty-five and sixty in 1860. One was born in a foreign country, and one was born in a slave state. Most men who enlisted and were born in a foreign country were typically older and between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine, totaling 57 percent of those born in a foreign country. In contrast, those born in a free state had the greatest variability in their ages and tended to be between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine, totaling 65 percent of those born in a free state. Most men born in a slave state were between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four, totaling 68 percent of the men born in a slave state.

Table 1⁹⁵*Vicksburg Enlistees' Age Distribution*

Age Distribution:	Total	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Under 15	2	1.1%	1.1%
15-19	44	24.4%	25.5%
20-24	51	28.3%	53.8%
25-29	40	22.2%	76.0%
30-34	19	10.6%	86.6%
35-39	11	6.1%	92.7%
40-44	7	3.9%	96.6%
45-49	1	0.6%	97.2%
50-54	1	0.6%	97.8%
55-60	2	1.1%	98.9%
Unknown	2	1.1%	100%
TOTAL	180	100%	100%

The fact that younger men were more likely to enlist is not surprising. In 1860, 38 percent of the city's military age men were married, and 29 percent of them had at least one child. Only 10 percent of Vicksburg's married men and 9 percent of fathers enlisted in the Confederate Army.⁹⁶ Marriage and children meant additional responsibilities, making such men less able to enlist and risk leaving their dependents without a provider. Less-established individuals, like those aged twenty to twenty-four, had more flexibility. Additionally, only 31 percent of enlisted men were still living with at least one parent in 1860, leaving an estimated 50 percent of enlisted men with no dependents and no nuclear family relying on them for support.⁹⁷ They had few

⁹⁵ Ages based on the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. The average enlisted man was twenty-five years old in 1860. Percentages reference the number of men within the given age distribution.

⁹⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. Twenty percent of enlisted men were married, and 14 percent had at least one child in 1860.

⁹⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

commitments tying them to Vicksburg, but they were committed to the South, making the decision to enlist much simpler.

Men who had families clearly worried about their loved ones; many of them took the time to write to their wives, as well as to their parents and siblings. Edwin Herring frequently wrote to his wife to explain how much he missed her. “Do you not wonder my Darling whether I am ever home sick? I need not assure you that such is the case, words cannot describe how I long for your society and home.”⁹⁸ Of course, Herring had only just married in January 1863. He was anxious to begin his life with his bride. Tellingly, however, Herring stayed with the army at least through March 1864, when the correspondence ended. He even encouraged his younger brother to fight for the Confederacy as late as December 1863, *after* Vicksburg fell. He explained, “You will soon leave home and all that you hold dear to fight for the right of your country and that too at the darkest hour the confederacy has yet seen.”⁹⁹ Even after the city’s capitulation, Herring believed the Confederacy could still win the war, and he believed his family’s hardships were worth that victory. They were fighting for the South.

Unmarried men also demonstrated their concern for their families. W.B. McGehee sent twenty dollars to his mother, brother, and sisters in February 1862. He explained it was to keep him from wasting the money and that he knew they needed it more than he did.¹⁰⁰ Unmarried, he had been living with his family when he enlisted and was concerned about their welfare, but he also wanted them to be at peace with his absence. Similarly, Walter Adams told his parents to “give my love to all the family and

⁹⁸ Herring to his wife, May 16, 1863, 2.

⁹⁹ Herring to his brother December 1, 1863.

¹⁰⁰ W. B. McGehee to his mother, Mrs. L.S. McGehee, February 12, 1862, McGehee Family Papers, 1854-1874, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

tell them to write to me.”¹⁰¹ In an attempt to stay up to date with the news from the city as well, Adams asked his parents about the *Vicksburg Whig*, one of the city’s major newspapers. He wanted to retain as normal a life as possible, and he worried about his home. However, he and others like him believed his absence was necessary.

Of course, even some men who did not have families when they enlisted had connections linking them to the city. After all, they had been living in or near the city for at least the year prior to their enlistment. They had to find ways to survive. That included finding a source of income and a place to live. Inevitably, many of them built relationships with their neighbors and co-workers. Like their counterparts in other parts of the South, these men often enlisted with those neighbors. However, even if every male friend they made in Vicksburg enlisted with them, they were still leaving behind the women of the community. Men planning to settle in Vicksburg would have also begun establishing relationships with women of their socio-economic status. Social mores of the day linked marriage with stability and respectability. Joseph O. Conner certainly appears to have written to a woman he had been courting before he left for the war. “If you will be so kind and answer these few lines and let me know how you are getting along it will be the happiest Christmas gift I have received in a long time.”¹⁰² S.E. Rankin told his sweetheart that he hoped peace would come swiftly and that “there is nothing on earth can give me as much pleasure as seeing you the one whom I love so

¹⁰¹ Walter Adams to his mother and father September 20, 1861, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. See also, W.D. Cobb to his sister, Miss Sallie E. Cobb, June 25, 1861, Records of the Sixteenth Mississippi Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS for a similar sentiment.

¹⁰² Joseph O. Conner to Miss Mary E. Lewis, December 1862, Records of the Sixteenth Mississippi Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

dearly.”¹⁰³ He was anxious to begin his life with this woman. Edwin Herring could not wait until the war’s end to marry Emma Griffing and chose to marry her during his furlough in early 1863.¹⁰⁴ However, such men were only beginning to establish roots in Vicksburg. They had a reason to resist secession and fight for the city’s future, but they had deeper connections to the South.

Some of these young men embraced Confederate nationalism to such a degree that they began referring to the United States as a foreign country as soon as Mississippi seceded. After all, how could Abner James Wilkes join “in defense of [his] country” if he did not view the United States as foreign?¹⁰⁵ Other men explained their enlistment as a reaction to the abuses of the United States government and President Abraham Lincoln, who one Vicksburg men declared “depraved and hardened in deceit and falsehood.”¹⁰⁶ Walter Adams demonstrated this sentiment in his response to Lincoln’s promises made between secession and the start of the war: “the whole thing you see from beginning to end is nothing but a conglomeration of false statements in order to smooth it over and make it appear in the eyes of foreign powers that the blame was wholly ours.”¹⁰⁷ Vicksburgians with this perspective believed the Union’s ultimate goal was to enslave Southerners and saw their individual independence and that of their families as resting on the outcome of this war. Without this conviction, many soldiers would not have been able to leave the homes to which they were so attached. As Thomas David Wallace confided, “the battlefield is nothing to taking the parting hand with my mother.”¹⁰⁸

¹⁰³ S.E. Rankin to Miss M.A. Ford, December 12, 1861, William H. McCardle Papers, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

¹⁰⁴ Herring to his wife January 1863.

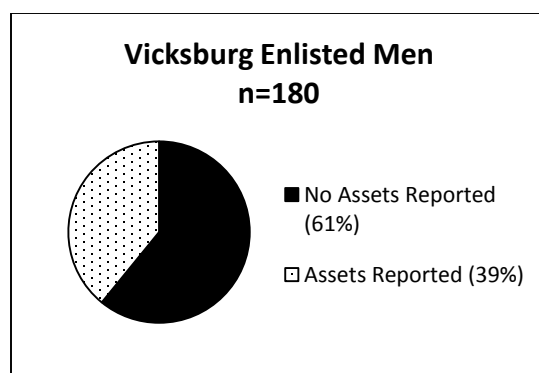
¹⁰⁵ Wilkes, *A Short History*, 1.

¹⁰⁶ Walter Adams to his mother June 1, 1861, 2.

¹⁰⁷ Walter Adams to his father July 15, 1861, 1, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

¹⁰⁸ Thomas David Wallace diary, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 9.

Emphasizing these soldiers' resolve is the fact that some men suspected the government might not be able to pay them. In July 1861, Walter Adams told his mother that he and his comrades had been purchasing their own food, shelter, and clothing since their enlistment. Some of them, Adams added, did not expect a reimbursement or even the government's promised pay.¹⁰⁹ Had these soldiers enlisted for monetary gain, such a perspective probably would have led them to desert. They remained because they perceived enlistment as their duty to the South and as the best route for protecting their futures. Thus, economic reasons did not appear to prompt most Warren County men to enlist. In 1860, the U.S. Bureau of the Census listed the estimated monetary value of each citizen's assets. Sixty-one percent of the Vicksburg men who enlisted had nothing listed. Of those with a listed value, 63 percent reported less than \$10,000 (see Figures 19, 20, and 21).¹¹⁰ As Chapter II discusses, these reports were quite different in Natchez, where only 37 percent of enlisted men reported no value. Vicksburg men did not enlist because they believed it was the best method for maintaining their economic futures.



*Figure 19. Assets Breakdown of Vicksburg Enlisted Men.*¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Walter Adams to his mother June 25, 1861, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 1.

¹¹⁰ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

¹¹¹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. Please note, the term "Assets" here refers to two categories on the census record, "Value of Real Estate" and the "Value of Personal Estate."

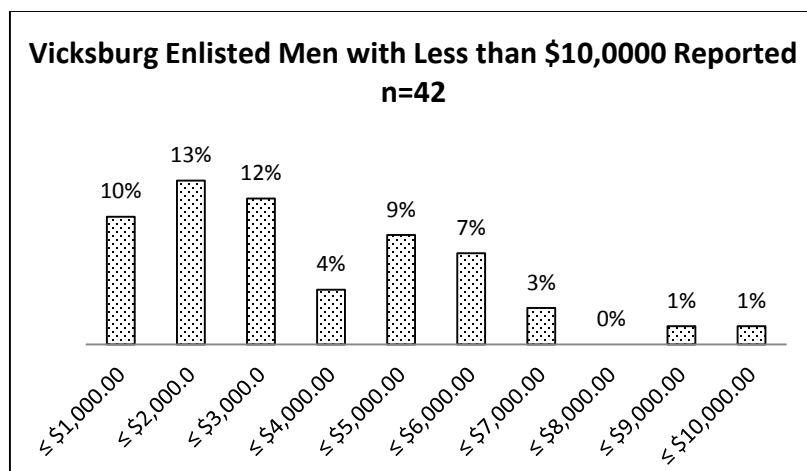


Figure 20. Breakdown of Vicksburg Enlisted Men who Reported Less than \$10,000.

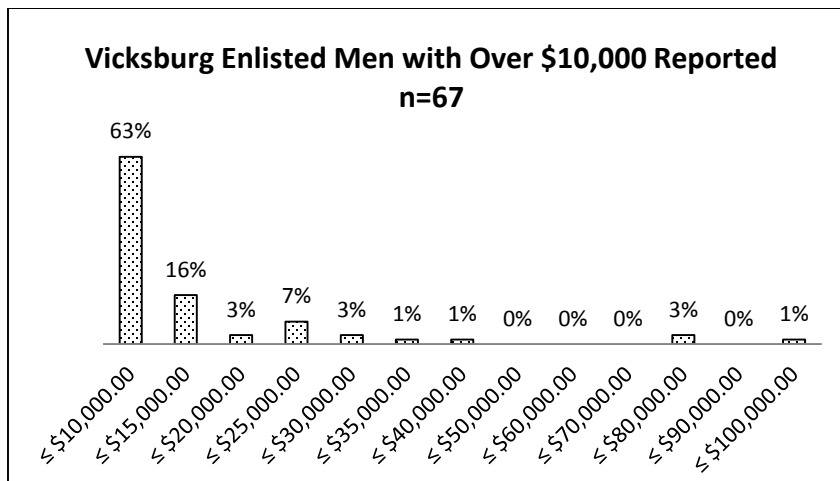


Figure 21. Breakdown of Vicksburg Enlisted Men who Reported Over \$10,000.

Vicksburg enlisted men did not enlist seeking a source of income, either, as soldiers like Walter Adams demonstrated. Many of these men had entered the city seeking work, and as a young, burgeoning city, Vicksburg was a place to find it. Men who enlisted in 1861 listed thirty-three different occupations on the 1860 Census record. Their Natchez counterparts only listed twenty-five, but even that number emphasizes the options that were available to men who sought work in cities, even in the South. Only 18 percent of Vicksburg enlisted men listed no occupation on the census record. Most of

them worked as tradesmen or craftsmen *or* in the mercantile industry, but a number of them worked in agriculture as laborers or as professionals, including doctors, lawyers, and teachers. Ultimately, 23 percent of enlisted men worked in the mercantile industry, while 28 percent worked as craftsmen or tradesmen – typically as a carpenter or machinist. Most in the mercantile industry were clerks. Nine percent of these men worked in agriculture, with thirteen percent working as laborers; and 10 percent worked in professionally-oriented jobs.¹¹² Most Vicksburg men did not need to enlist to find work; instead, their reasons were ideological. As their letters demonstrated, they saw enlistment as the best outlet for protecting the values they held as Southerners; they had strongly embraced Confederate nationalism.

Of course, like many Southerners, most Warren County soldiers believed the war would be won quickly.¹¹³ W. D. Cobb went so far as to say he was uncertain there would even be a war. He hoped to be home by September 1861.¹¹⁴ Walter Adams exclaimed early on, “if we can get them to meet us in open combat, we shall be sure to give them such a thrashing they will never dare to meet us again.”¹¹⁵ Edwin Herring also discussed his firm belief that foreign recognition was inevitable and that victory would be swift to follow.¹¹⁶ Although S.E. Rankin agreed that this was the opinion held by most people, he was not entirely convinced victory would be so simple, but he expected foreign recognition and a victory.¹¹⁷ For these men, victory was not a question.

¹¹² U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

¹¹³ McPherson’s *For Cause and Comrades* shows that both Northern and Southern soldiers believed the war would be over quickly, and Vicksburg soldiers are no exception.

¹¹⁴ Cobb to his sister, June 25, 1861.

¹¹⁵ Adams to his mother and father, September 20, 1861, 1.

¹¹⁶ Herring to his wife, March 6, 1863.

¹¹⁷ Rankin to Miss M.A. Ford, December 12, 1861.

Many of these men were resolved to fight as bravely as possible, even if it cost them their lives.¹¹⁸ George Albert Grammer linked his embrace of Confederate nationalism to courage when he quoted Patrick Henry's famous words "Give me liberty or give me death."¹¹⁹ Significantly, Grammer made this statement *after* his first experience in combat. He had seen his comrades fall, but he was still resolved to fight for his country's independence. He was in the midst of a revolution. He and other Vicksburg soldiers would have agreed with Herring when he said he would "go whenever duty calls, placing my life in the hands of Him who gave it."¹²⁰ Bravely sacrificing for one's country was a duty, and as W. B. McGehee explained, that included coping with the hardships of both combat and camp life.¹²¹ Duty and bravery, of course, did not eliminate fear. Abner James Wilkes extensively described the fear he felt during an incident that left him behind enemy lines, and undoubtedly, he was not alone in this fear, as historians who have discussed battlefield courage have noted.¹²²

These soldiers recognized courage when they saw it. J.E.B. Stuart himself complimented one Vicksburg soldier on his bravery. Following the Battle of Dranesville, a small Union victory in northern Virginia in late 1861, both Union and Confederate

¹¹⁸ See Gerald Linderman, *Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War* (New York: Free Press, 1987) for a discussion of the significance soldiers placed on acts of courage in combat. While Linderman argues that these soldiers enlisted in an attempt to fulfill these ideals and that their experiences in combat shattered those ideals, Vicksburg soldiers did not fit this model. They enlisted because they embraced Confederate nationalism and the notion that the South was more "American" than the North. The need to display courage, although diminished, did not completely disappear. These sentiments continued to exist into 1863 and 1864, as these men believed God was on their side and that they had a duty to continue fighting for the South.

¹¹⁹ George Albert Grammer diary, August 1861, quoted in "Diary of Vicksburger – Warren's Light Artillery Enters War Aboard 'Chasm'," *Vicksburg Evening Post*, June 10, 1963.

¹²⁰ Edwin Herring to his wife, Mary Emma Griffing Herring, March 24, 1863, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. See also, letter to M.M. Champion, May 18, 1863. The Herring emphasized the importance of taking courage in the face of camp life and the war.

¹²¹ See, W.B. McGehee to his mother, February 12, 1862.

¹²² Wilkes, *A Short History*. D.C.M. Higham also discussed the anxiety he experienced as he entered a battle in his memoir, *Personal Reminiscences of the Civil War*.

soldiers remarked on the courage of a Confederate officer who rode a grey horse.¹²³ Stuart identified that man as Lieutenant C. L. Jackson of Vicksburg and wrote him a letter complimenting him. He even attached a note written by Colonel Thomas Kain of the Union Army, who “desires to speak in terms of commendation and praise of the gallant conduct of the officer that rode the Grey horse.”¹²⁴ Jackson usually served as an aid to Brigadier General Sam Jones, who also complimented him on his bravery.¹²⁵ When Confederate soldier Nimrod Newton Nash lost two comrades in combat, he concluded that they were good soldiers, as they had died bravely.¹²⁶ When Nash perished, his brother-in-law understood the importance of this courage to both the soldiers and to their families when he wrote to his sister, Nash’s wife. He wrote, “I assure you Mollie he fell while nobly defending his country . . . as soon as he was shot he fell and told Wallace our sgt. he was gone and he was willing to die.”¹²⁷ Vicksburg soldiers took pride in the devotion of men like Lieutenant Jackson and in the resolve volunteers like Nash showed with his clear devotion to Southern independence.

For many of these men, coping with camp life was much more difficult than confronting their fears in combat, but as Vicksburgian W.B. McGehee hinted, this too

¹²³ The Battle of Dranesville was called a “battle” by J.E.B. Stuart, the General in charge of Confederate forces at the battle, and other soldiers of the time. It is not, however, a battle that had far-reaching consequences and was nowhere near as large as later engagements. Part of General George B. McClellan’s operations in Virginia, there were 301 casualties total (71 Union and 230 Confederate). See, Heritage Preservation Services, “Dranesville,” *CWSAC Battle Summaries: The American Battlefield Protection Program (ABPP)*, www.Nps.gov/hps/abpp/battles/va007.htm.

¹²⁴ Brigadier General J.E.B. Stuart to Lieutenant C. L. Jackson, C.S.A, January 10, 1862, and Colonel Thos. Kain to Brigadier General J.E.B. Stuart, December 20, 1861, Records of the Fourteenth Mississippi Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

¹²⁵ Brigadier General Sam Jones to Lieutenant C. L. Jackson, C.S.A., January 10, 1862, Records of the Fourteenth Mississippi Infantry Regiment, Mississippi Department of Archives and History.

¹²⁶ Nimrod Newton Nash to his wife, Mollie Nash, August 1861, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

¹²⁷ Ross to his sister, July 14, 1863. Linderman’s *Embattled Courage* argues that civilians also embraced antebellum notions of courage but that unlike the soldiers, whose experiences shattered those notions, civilian embracement persisted into Reconstruction.

was their duty. One soldier summed up camp life with a question, “are we civilized or are we savage?”¹²⁸ Of course, he was specifically referring to life in Vicksburg during the siege, and conditions there were worse than anything the soldiers had faced. By June 1863, disease and hunger had reached a peak, but McGehee wanted to continue fighting. However, camp life in general was difficult. Exhausted from combat or from marching throughout the day, soldiers lived in cramped conditions that were a breeding ground for diseases. Increasingly poor nutrition, a product of the South’s diminishing supplies, only heightened this problem. To make matters worse, soldiers still had to work within the camps, including both cooking and sentry duty.¹²⁹ Walter Adams, in addition to other Vicksburg soldiers, frequently discussed the pervasiveness of disease. In fact, the only thing soldiers discussed more were their movements, rumors about where they were headed, their hopes, and how much they missed their families. On September 1, 1861, Adams counted forty sick men in his company, three or four of whom were serious. He counted at least fifteen deaths in the entire regiment, including two in his company. However, most of these men had requested furloughs, and as Adams explained, “notwithstanding all this sickness, our men are in fine spirits, and anxious to be brought in contact with the common enemy.”¹³⁰

For Vicksburg soldiers to continue enduring these hardships, an economic incentive was not enough, as they could find work in the city. They needed a cause, and they found that cause in Confederate nationalism. However, they also needed the support

¹²⁸ Letter to M.M. Champion, May 18, 1863.

¹²⁹ McPherson’s *For Cause and Comrades* and Linderman’s *Embattled Courage* are just two of many works that detail Civil War camp life. The significance here is that most Vicksburg soldiers were willing to endure even this hardship.

¹³⁰ Walter Adams to his Father and Mother, September 25, 1861, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 2.

of their families. As Nimrod Newton Nash explained to his wife, “to know that I have your thoughts and progress is great consolation.”¹³¹ The fact that men continuously wrote their families requesting correspondence only emphasizes this need. G.W. Bynum explained this sentiment best when he said, “nothing can so lift [?] up the heart of a sick soldier as words of encouragement kindness and consolations received from those whom we have left behind.”¹³² Soldiers also needed their families to send them supplies. Adams, Nash, Herring, and McGehee were just four of many Vicksburg soldiers who wrote their families requesting extra clothes for the winter.¹³³ Familial support was a necessary component to Vicksburg soldiers’ steadfast determination.

As might be expected, not all Vicksburg soldiers experienced this degree of determination. Edwin Herring named two of his comrades who were hiring substitutes so that they could go home, and there were certainly more in other companies. As Herring explained, however, these men had their reasons for returning to their homes, and leaving did not automatically mean they had rejected Confederate nationalism or even placed their own needs above the needs of the Confederacy. They may have felt their strengths were better utilized on the home front. As he wrote, “I am sure that they can be of much more service attending their plantations at home than they will be here.”¹³⁴ For some men, leaving may have represented a rejection of Confederate nationalism, and they may

¹³¹ Nash to his wife, August 1861, 2.

¹³² G.W. Bynum to Miss Fannie, June 17, 1861, William H. McCardle Papers, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 1.

¹³³ Walter Adams to his mother, September 1, 1861, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. Nash to his wife, August 1861, Herring to his wife, March 24, 1863, and W.B. McGehee to his mother, February 12, 1862.

¹³⁴ Edwin Herring to his wife, Mary Emma Griffing Herring, March 8, 1863 Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. See also, Edwin Herring to his wife, March 6, 1863. As stated earlier, Rubin’s *A Shattered Nation* also argues that, at times, Southerners acted in ways that hurt the Confederacy, but those actions did not always represent a rejection of Confederate nationalism.

have concluded that the South could no longer protect their interests and values, as was the case for most Natchezians. However, these men were a minority in Vicksburg.

On the home front, civilians also embraced Confederate nationalism, and they formed a supporting network for the soldiers. Most soldiers could not have sustained the level of determination necessary for fighting for Southern independence without that support. Sophie Adams Goodrum suppressed her anxiety because, as she explained, she understood the need for her brother to leave for war, “to battle for the Independence of our downtrodden country.”¹³⁵ By 1863, civilians were increasingly anxious about the lives of their soldiers, as they had already lost many of them. Their support, however, never wavered. Jim Harris responded to his brother’s letter by saying how relieved he was to have heard from him. He exclaimed, “I poured out my heartfelt prayers to God for His truly great goodness and mercy. May He continue his watchful and merciful Providence over you!”¹³⁶ Despite his anxiety over both his brother’s safety and the safety of Vicksburg, however, Harris encouraged his brother to continue fighting for victory.

Emma Herring showed the importance of mutual support in the letters she wrote to her husband Edwin. She stated, “I am so weary of the struggle but with your prayers to encourage me, I will continue to persevere.”¹³⁷ After the siege, her anxiety only increased, but she continued encouraging Edwin to fight for the Confederacy because both honor and his duty to the South compelled him. She kept their correspondence focused on Southern victory rather than any problems at home, and she offered him

¹³⁵ Sophie Adams Goodrum, Diary, May 28, 1861 and final undated entry, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

¹³⁶ Jim W. M. Harris to his brother, June 8, 1863, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. See also, Mrs. Robacher to her son, John J. Robacher, May 25, 1865, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

¹³⁷ Mary Emma Griffing Herring to her husband, Edwin Herring, April 23, 1863, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

support for both his failures and his successes. For example, upon news that Edwin's company had retreated to Demopolis, Alabama, Emma provided her vote of confidence by saying, "it would have been fool-hardy, reckless to have met Sherman with your numbers."¹³⁸

Vicksburg civilians, like their military counterparts, originally resisted secession but saw the South as an independent nation after Mississippi left the Union. They embraced Confederate nationalism and were resolved to fight, a product of their pre-war connections to the South in general, as opposed to their community or Mississippi alone. Civilians found their own ways to support the South, even though they could not or chose not to enlist. One of those ways, of course, was by supporting their soldiers. They certainly took pride in those men, as exemplified by their attitudes towards the Volunteer Southrons. However, the city's civilians were also willing to put their own economic interests aside and were ready to make sacrifices for the South. To them, Confederate victory was more important than Vicksburg's prosperity. C.K. Marshall exemplified this feeling when he wrote to his brother. Rather than despair that the city was losing vital networks, he wrote,

Vicksburg is the gateway to the heart of the State, and the infernal Yankees desire to pass it and penetrate the interior. We only ask them to come ashore. We want to show them what these outraged and invaded people are made of . . . All is ready!

¹³⁸ Mary Emma Griffing Herring to her husband, Edwin Herring, December 6, 1863 and March 25, 1864, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. This retreat became part of Union Major General William T. Sherman's Meridian Campaign. Whether or not Emma was right in her assertion that her husband's regiment had made the correct decision in retreating is not the purpose of this study. This study only asserts that her statement offered him confirmation that his actions were right, a necessary component to his continued efforts as a soldier. Stephen Berry's *All That Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003) offers an in-depth discussion of the importance of women's love. Men needed it as confirmation for their ambitions. The battlefield offered them an opportunity to realize their ambitions of glory and to earn a woman's love. Ambition was meaningless without love, and love was hollow without the realization of that ambition. Berry asserts that these ideals shifted to reflections on home life and love as men experienced combat. Vicksburg men certainly fit this pattern, but women's love and support continued to be a necessary component to their continued determination to fight.

Let them land -- as for numbers, the more the better. But [the river] is closed to commerce and trade till peace is declared, the war closed, and our independence recognized.¹³⁹

To Vicksburgians, their city was important because it was vital to the Confederacy, a point of pride for these men and women. However, their individual interests, in terms of property, were subordinated to that significance. The Confederacy, not the city, was what mattered most. Marshall even promised that border states that failed to secede and support the South would be cut off from the city as a point of trade. His and other Vicksburgians' perspective on trade and its subordination to other goals differed greatly from that of the Natchezians', which will be discussed in the next chapter.

As Union gunboats reached the city in 1862, civilians began experiencing the war firsthand, culminating in a forty-seven day siege the following year; however, their determination never wavered. Mid-way through the siege, Vicksburgian Jim Harris, a thirty-five year old bookkeeper, reported that the entire county had been overrun by Federals who were destroying civilian property, but he still believed a victory was possible. He insisted that Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston would strike soon to "save gallant Vicksburg."¹⁴⁰ Harris knew the homes of his neighbors were being destroyed, and he knew both food and water shortages would only worsen. At one point, the army even placed a guard over at least one of the city's springs, limiting its access to military personnel.¹⁴¹ Additionally, Harris and other civilians had resorted to living in caves to take shelter from Union shells, which continued falling until the siege ended, and they were sharing their town with almost 30,000 Confederate troops. However, Harris

¹³⁹ C.K. Marshall to his brother, "The Bombardment of Vicksburg – Important Particulars," *Daily Mississippian*, June 30, 1862, Henry F. Cook Papers, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

¹⁴⁰ Harris to his brother, June 8, 1863, 2.

¹⁴¹ Aquila Bowie, Memoir, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

never once advocated for surrender. Rather, he believed God would grant the Confederacy a victory, as long as the city's civilians and defenders remained resilient and true to the cause of Confederate independence.

Emma Balfour, Elizabeth Bowie, Emma Herring, and other civilians also endured cave life, diminishing supplies, and the loss of staples, like salt and paper, as well as the daily destruction of their city. Balfour frequently noted the damage to the city's streets and homes, as well its livestock and the injuries of some of its civilians, but she and other civilians still supported the fight.¹⁴² That support came in two major forms: as nursing work and through their determination to live as normal a life as possible, despite besiegement, falling shells, and severe shortages of food.

For the defenders of the city and for Vicksburg soldiers fighting distant battles, the fact that their families were able to continue living relatively normal lives mattered. After all, that Southern lifestyle and the ideals attached to it was the main reason they were in the first place. If the war destroyed that culture, all the sacrifice was meaningless. Balfour recorded a conversation with Lieutenant General John C. Pemberton where he remarked, "The Yankees, if they could look in, would not think we minded the siege very much."¹⁴³ Fighting to live a normal life, despite war-time hardships, was a significant component of civilian determination to fight. Not surprisingly, then, families recorded

¹⁴² Emma Harrison Balfour, *Mrs. Balfour's Civil War Diary: A Personal Account of the Siege of Vicksburg*, edited by Gordon A. Cotton (Vicksburg: Old Court House Museum, 2004); Bowie, Memoir; and Mary Emma Griffing Herring letters to her husband, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. See also, Mary Webster Loughborough, *My Cave Life in Vicksburg with Letters of Trial and Travel* (New York: D. Appleton, 1864) Reprinted by the Vicksburg and Warren County Historical Society, Vicksburg MS, 2003. Loughborough was not a Vicksburg civilian; rather she followed her husband James Loughborough, a Confederate officer, to the city when he was transferred for its defense. However, her observations are informative about Vicksburg civilians' reactions to the siege.

¹⁴³ Balfour, *Mrs. Balfour's Diary*, 31.

their day-to-day life when they wrote to soldiers, and conversely, soldiers asked for that information.

On May 20, 1863, Balfour reported that Union gunboats had moved a group of mortars within range and that there was then “a rushing into the caves.”¹⁴⁴ Civilians took shelter when the shells came, and they slept in the caves at night, but during the day, they engaged in their usual daily activities. Balfour even refused to sleep in the caves some nights, despite her acknowledgement of the danger. She explained she “could not stand the mosquitoes and the crowd in the caves.”¹⁴⁵ She also realized that even they were not impenetrable, as she described several accidents. Alfred Quine continued to track the weather and his slaves’ daily activities in his plantation book, in addition to any problems on the property, even after Union troops reached his home, prompting many of his slaves to flee.¹⁴⁶ Balfour explained this form of resolute determination when she said, “The general impression is that they fire at the city in this way, thinking they will wear out the women and children and sick, and General Pemberton will be impatient to surrender the place on that account, but they little know the spirit of the Vicksburg women and children if they expect this. Rather than let them know that they were causing us any suffering, I would be content to suffer martyrdom!”¹⁴⁷

Elizabeth Bowie lived as normally as she could and even met her future husband during the siege, a Confederate surgeon named Dr. Charles T. McAnally. Their courtship took place throughout the siege, and the two wed August 11, 1863.¹⁴⁸ The *Vicksburg*

¹⁴⁴ Balfour, *Mrs. Balfour's Diary*, 16.

¹⁴⁵ Balfour, *Mrs. Balfour's Diary*, 29.

¹⁴⁶ Alfred Quine, Fonsylvania Plantation Book, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

¹⁴⁷ Balfour, *Mrs. Balfour's Diary*, 37.

¹⁴⁸ Bowie, *Memoir*.

Daily Citizen continued to publish its daily editions by printing on the back of wallpaper after its supply of paper disappeared.¹⁴⁹ Just before the surrender, its editor heard of Major General Ulysses S. Grant's plans to celebrate the Fourth of July in the city. He quipped, "Ulysses must get into the city before he dines in it. The way to cook a rabbit is 'first catch the rabbit.'" Just two days later, Union soldiers were able to retort, "The banner of the Union floats over Vicksburg. Gen. Grant 'caught the rabbit;' he has dined in Vicksburg, and he did bring his dinner with him."¹⁵⁰ Its civilians, however, had resisted until the end.

As with the soldiers, religion was an important component of civilian resistance. As Bowie told her sister, "I am not afraid, because we are doing a good work for the soldiers and God will take care of us."¹⁵¹ Faith gave men and women the strength to continue fighting, and they looked for salvation despite the horrors all around them. Emma Balfour found it when she said, "in the midst of all this carnage and commotion, it is touching to see how every work of God save man, gives praise to him . . . nature is more lovely than usual."¹⁵² Fearing for her brother's life, Sophie Adams Goodrum found solace when she prayed to God for his safety.¹⁵³ The war tested some civilians' faith, including Emma Herring, who said that the destruction around her was, at times, too incomprehensible for her to bear. Nonetheless, she continued praying and believed that the Lord had a plan; she promised her husband that she would be able to persevere through the struggle as long as he continued praying for her.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁹ Cotton and Giambrone, *Vicksburg and the War*.

¹⁵⁰ *Vicksburg Daily Citizen*, July 2, 4, 1863.

¹⁵¹ Bowie, *Memoir*, 1.

¹⁵² Balfour, *Mrs. Balfour's Diary*, 26. See also, Loughborough, *My Cave Life*.

¹⁵³ Goodrum, *diary*, May 28, 1861.

¹⁵⁴ For examples, see, Herring to her husband, April, 23, 1863, April 28, 1863, December 6, 1863, January 4, 1864, and March 25, 1864, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

Of course, not all civilians were this resolute. Emma Balfour reported that a group of civilians had put together a petition “asking General Pemberton to grant a flag of truce to send the women and children beyond the lines.”¹⁵⁵ Significantly, however, few signed it. Civilians were certainly afraid, but they were able to push through that fear through their Christian faith and their acceptance of Confederate nationalism. They were in the midst of a fight for Southern independence and believed that made every sacrifice worth-while. Every time one of his slaves fled to the Union Army, Albert Quine recorded it in his plantation book. He was clearly afraid for the future of his plantation as he watched his entire way of life falling apart. Quine probably joined other local men in hiding cotton bales to prevent soldiers of both armies from burning them. Nonetheless, he continued providing the Confederate Army with supplies he could spare.¹⁵⁶ Men like Quine were willing to make sacrifices for what they believed was a worthy fight for Southern independence.

Undoubtedly, for many civilians, this fear only made them more determined to continue fighting. Emma Herring feared for her home, the war effort, and above all her husband’s life, but worsening conditions increased her resolve to continue fighting for her family’s future in the South. By December 6, 1863, Herring had not heard from her husband in several weeks, and her anxiety over his survival reached a peak. Rather than beg him to come home, however, she encouraged him to continue fighting – a sentiment she was able to maintain despite the situation at home by linking the anxiety she felt for her husband to the problems in Vicksburg. When Emma Herring began expressing her

¹⁵⁵ Balfour, *Mrs. Balfour’s Diary*, 37.

¹⁵⁶ Quine, Fonsylvania Plantation Book. See also, Herring to her husband, April 28, 1863. She explains to her husband that many men were attempting to find a safe place for both cotton bales and slaves.

anxiety over Edwin's whereabouts, she immediately jumped to a three page discussion of her uncle's murder, who had become a victim of the "depredations" committed by the Union Army in her uncle's town. Immediately following that discussion, she once again expressed the deep fear she felt over his missing correspondence, thus associating problems on the home front with her anxiety over her husband. Herring saw death all around her, and until the war ended, she told herself her husband could perish at home almost as easily as he could at the front.¹⁵⁷

James Allen, however, may offer the most representative example of Vicksburg civilians' attitudes towards the Confederacy. In 1860, Allen owned Nanecheaw Plantation in Warren County, Mississippi. Seventy-seven adult slaves, in addition to their children, worked his lands. He relied on Vicksburg and the river for his economic success, and he was no proponent of secession. On the other hand, he was not pleased with Abraham Lincoln's election to the presidency, either. He just hoped for a better solution. In his plantation book, Allen discussed daily activities on the plantation, but he also noted significant political events. After the state seceded, he immediately began showing his support for the Confederacy by tracking the secession movement's progress, in this case hoping other states would follow Mississippi in seceding.

Allen was not fit to enlist, as he had gout and additional health problems. However, he and other civilians like him believed that the South would only be successful if some workers remained at home to work. Both he and fellow Vicksburgian Richard T. Archer specifically noted the lack of overseers as a major problem. As Archer explained, "The sustenance of the army and our population is dependent on the labors of

¹⁵⁷ Herring to her husband, December 6, 1863, 2.

our negroes. Yet all the gallant young men feel they should be in the army while the nothing-to-do's remain at home. The success of this war depends no less on the agricultural laborers than on the soldiers.”¹⁵⁸ Allen took pride in his work and in his ability to continue living as normal a life as possible, but he also took pride in local enlistments and wanted to contribute to the war effort. He immediately sent supplies to the units headed to Richmond for the war, and he began tracking the war's progress. Significantly, he also noted the birth of a slave in September 1861 and took the time to list her name, which was unique to these entries. Her name was *Manassas*. Like other Vicksburgians, however, Allen also attempted to maintain as normal a life as possible and continued tracking the plantation's daily activities in his journal.

He clearly worried about the war's effect on Vicksburg, as he noted the Union's route to the city, and he was bitter that the Confederate government had mandated the burning of his cotton bales. There were limits to Allen's support. Otherwise, he would not have refused to send his slaves to work on fortifications when a “Mr. Hankerson” requested his assistance, and he would not have attempted to hide forty-seven bales of cotton. In the case of the slaves, however, he clearly wrestled with his decision not to send them. He simply could not justify marching them twenty-five miles to work one night, and he had no overseer to send with them. As far as the cotton, he acknowledged the need to burn the cotton if it seemed it might fall into the hands of the Union. However, he was ordered to burn it in mid-1862, when he still questioned the Union's ability to reach his property. To him, the war was a fight for his rights as a Southerner; that included owning slaves and maintaining control over his property. Yet, even after

¹⁵⁸ Richard T. Archer to John Hampden Randolph, March 25, 1862, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 1.

Confederate troops burned all of his cotton bales, he volunteered to send corn and beef to the army. Clearly Allen was willing — not always, but when able — to subordinate his economic interests to his cultural ideals as a Southerner, and he was willing to sacrifice Vicksburg's prosperity for the good of the Confederacy.¹⁵⁹

Through a combination of factors, Vicksburgians embraced Confederate nationalism. They had important ties to the North through trade and initially resisted secession in an effort to maintain those links, but their connections to the South were far more powerful, making their economic futures in Vicksburg subordinate to their futures as Southerners. Most had only just begun to establish themselves within the city, but most had been born, or had someone close to them born, in a slave state, linking them to the South as a whole through kinship and culture. Men and women without those connections but who still supported the Confederacy were generally poorer and had other distinct reasons for embracing slavery, including its ability to provide them with a sense of superiority, self-respect, and social power.¹⁶⁰ Regardless of the specific reasons each Vicksburgian chose to support the South and defend Southern interests. Both civilians and soldiers began to see the Confederacy as their nation, rather than the United States, and they believed God was on their side. Southern ideology and Confederate nationalism had taken a hold of the city.

¹⁵⁹ James Allen, *Nanecheaw Plantation Book, 1860-1865*, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

¹⁶⁰ See, Johnson, *Soul by Soul* and Edmund S. Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom* (New York: Norton, 1975).

CHAPTER III

'PRECIPITATED INTO REVOLUTION:' NATCHEZ RESPONDS TO SECESSION

By 1860, Natchez was the largest and wealthiest city in the state.¹⁶¹ Popular memory of the city often points to these qualities, depicting it as a quintessential example of antebellum Southern life. Yet, Natchez's response to the war resembled the complexity found in places like Missouri, Kentucky, and other border states, and its resistance to secession and early surrender suggests pro-Union sentiments in its citizens. Unlike most pockets of unionism in the state, however, Natchez was not isolated and rural. Rather, it was a center of trade, with networks ranging from New Orleans to New York, and its wealth was directly reliant on the slave-labor system. For these reasons, most Natchezians were neither pro-North, nor fully supportive of the war effort in 1861 and 1862. This response separated them from similar Southern cities and towns, as they believed the Union and old Whig traditions offered the best route for protecting their interests.¹⁶² Ultimately, Natchezians vacillated between their dual commitments to the Union and the South – their method of defending the city and the community. But they eventually embraced Confederate nationalism as it best fit their community's needs, a topic discussed in the final chapter of this thesis.

On December 10, 1860, Joe Baldwin captured the way most Natchezians felt when he stated, "my proclivities are for the preservation of that Union – not by coercion, but by concession itself, which would admit the wrong done by the North to their brethren of the South."¹⁶³ Like most Southerners, Baldwin was committed to slavery and

¹⁶¹ James, *Antebellum Natchez*.

¹⁶² For this definition of unionism, see Gary Gallagher, *The Union War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).

¹⁶³ Joe Baldwin to his brother, Bice ----, December 10, 1860, Records of the First Mississippi Light Artillery Regiment, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

to Southern culture, which he believed was being attacked by a Northern aggressor. The South, in turn, had a right to defend itself. Baldwin, like many of his neighbors, however, was even more committed to the prosperity of his community and its economic and familial ties to the South and the North. Additionally, like many Northerners, Baldwin felt that disunion would confirm to Europe and the rest of the world that republicanism as a political system was fatally flawed. As a result, Natchez resisted secession and maintained pro-Union sentiments in a manner that set it apart from most of the state. At the same time, however, Natchezians continued to believe that the South had a superior economic system to the North, and they remained intensely sensitive to any threats to the institution of slavery. They were sectionalists, meaning they believed there were fundamental differences between the North and the South, but they did not see a need to act on those differences by seceding from the Union.

Natchez was home to more than 6,000 men, women, and children. Roughly 22 percent were born in a foreign country, 13 percent in a free state, and 65 percent in a slave state. Of that number, 81 percent were specifically born in Mississippi (see Figures 22 and 23).¹⁶⁴ As in Vicksburg's case, a large portion of Natchezian citizens were under fifteen years of age. Significantly, however, 49 percent of military age men in Natchez were born in a slave state, with 75 percent of that number specifically born in Mississippi (see Figures 24 and 25).¹⁶⁵ These percentages are very different from Vicksburg and demonstrate that Natchez's population was more established. It further suggests that Natchezians were more attached to their community.

¹⁶⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

¹⁶⁵ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

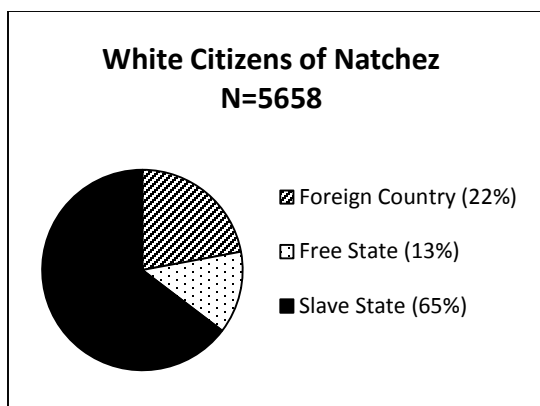


Figure 22. Birthplaces of Natchezians.¹⁶⁶

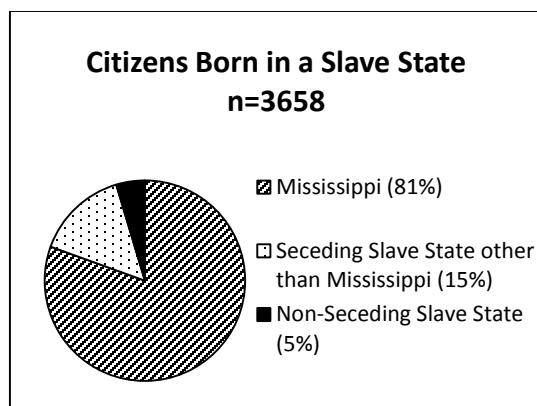


Figure 23. Breakdown of Slave State Births.

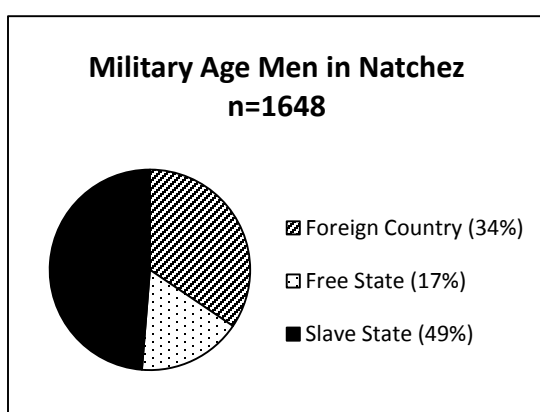


Figure 24. Birthplaces of Natchez Military Age Men.

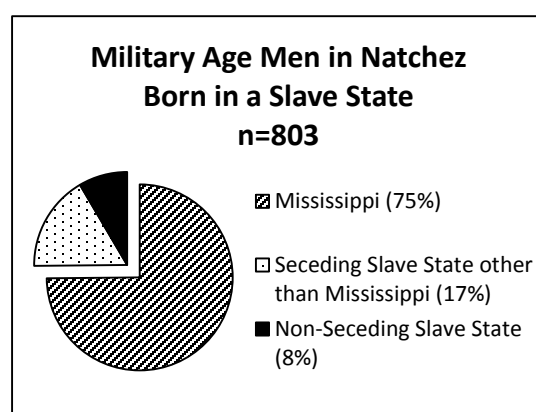


Figure 25. Birthplaces of Natchez Military Age Men Born in a Slave State.

By 1860, the city of Natchez had a well-established, tight-knit community. That fact alone encouraged people to stay. As a city, of course, it had boarding houses for people passing through town. Strikingly, however, only nine boarding houses and four hotels were documented on the U.S. Census record, a glaring contrast to Vicksburg's twenty-five.¹⁶⁷ More people owned their homes in Natchez – a clear sign of community permanence. Supporting this established community and encouraging newcomers to stay were a number of social institutions, including a variety of Christian churches and a small

¹⁶⁶ As in Chapter I, the term “slave state” in Figure 1 and all subsequent Figures includes all states where slavery was legal in 1860.

¹⁶⁷ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

Jewish population. The largest congregations were Baptist and Methodist, but Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics also had a home in the city.¹⁶⁸ Natchez also boasted places of entertainment, including a racetrack and Institute Hall, where locals could find live entertainment featuring actors from all over the nation. In contrast to Vicksburg, the city also had two orphanages: St. Mary's Orphan Asylum, which housed seventy-five girls aged fourteen years or younger, and the Natchez Orphan Asylum, which housed thirty-three children.¹⁶⁹

The city also boasted a variety of schools in the city. As Julia Huston Nguyen explains in "The Value of Learning," the wealthiest children, of course, had access to private tutors, but Natchez also had a number of Catholic schools for children of varying social classes. By 1845, the city had opened the Natchez Institute, which offered free education to local boys and girls. Education was thus available to all white children in Natchez. Public education was more geared towards practical subjects than towards the study of the classics, but as Nguyen explains, knowledge offered at least an opportunity for citizens to improve their social position, making education a powerful reason for citizens to continue living in the city. The wealthiest citizens, as she further explains, also saw this facet as advantageous, as they believed it symbolized their city's success.¹⁷⁰

Not surprisingly with this focus on children, marriage rates were much higher in Natchez than in Vicksburg. At least 26 percent of Natchez's population was married by 1860. As 37 percent were under the age of fifteen, only 37 percent of the population

¹⁶⁸ This study does not postulate about the reasons the Baptist and Methodist Churches were so much larger, but Christine Leigh Heyrman's *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* (New York: A. A. Knopf. Distributed by Random House, 1997) convincingly argues that these two groups were able to adapt in order to appeal to Southerners who were reliant on a slave system.

¹⁶⁹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

¹⁷⁰ See, Nguyen, "The Value of Learning"

included unmarried adults, of which a small percentage were certainly married at one time (see Figure 26).¹⁷¹ Families rather than single men and women predominated in Natchez, making the population more stable and committed to preserving the city's prosperity. Also emphasizing this point, 92 percent of women had no occupation listed on the census record (see Figure 27). Although the actual number may be underestimated, these women were half as likely as their Vicksburg counterparts to need a job outside of the home, a fact that is not surprising given the difference in marriage rates. Natchezian women had more time to devote towards the betterment of their community, through such volunteer activities as fundraisers for the American Publishing House for the Blind, organizing temperance movements, and eventually caring for Natchezian soldiers who left for the war and were wounded in it.

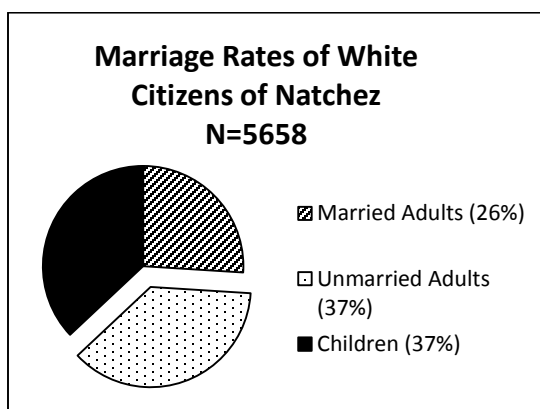


Figure 26. Marriage Rates in Natchez.¹⁷²

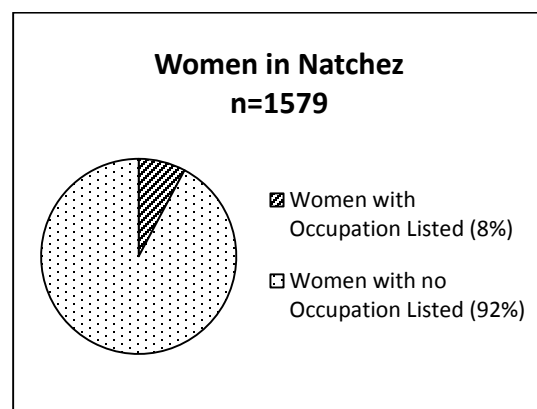


Figure 27. Women in Natchez with an Occupation Listed.

As historian Joyce Broussard has shown, women who did need to find work had more options than their Vicksburg counterparts, likely a product of Natchez's established

¹⁷¹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. In contrast, 60 percent of adults in Vicksburg were unmarried. There were 1.3 men per every one woman in Natchez; in Vicksburg, there were 1.4 men per every one woman. These differences were not because of a lack of women in Vicksburg.

¹⁷² Children are considered those citizens aged fourteen years or younger. Marriage and occupation rates are based on the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

social institutions.¹⁷³ Strikingly, Natchezian women listed twenty-six different jobs, in contrast to Vicksburg's seventeen. The two most popular options were to work as dressmakers or teachers. Far fewer women became servants or worked as seamstresses than in Vicksburg, although a comparable number became milliners.¹⁷⁴ Natchezian women tended to find jobs they would have considered more dignified and highly skilled, which would not have been possible in a place lacking an established community and a stable economy.

The fact that some of the wealthiest planters in the entire South lived in Natchez only helped stabilize the community. There was a remarkable degree of intermarriage among the elite, as there was little childhood interaction outside of this social class.¹⁷⁵ These families constituted their own sub-community and were committed to each other, their homes, and their prosperity. As historian William K. Scarborough explains, their reaction to secession varied across the South, but in Natchez, elite men were usually Unionists, since remaining in the Union was central to protecting their interests.¹⁷⁶

Important to Natchez and its response to war, of course, was the institution of slavery. The Forks of the Road Slave Market, Mississippi's largest slave-trading market,

¹⁷³ Broussard, "Malvina Matthews."

¹⁷⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. Twenty-nine Natchez women listed "dress maker." Thirty-one listed "governess" or "teacher," and twelve listed "milliner." Only nine women listed "seamstress," and only six listed "servant." Other occupations included tavern keeper, merchant, boarding house, and even carpenter.

¹⁷⁵ For a detailed discussion of these planters, see, Scarborough, *Masters of the Big House*. See also, Scarborough, "Not Quite Southern," and William K. Scarborough, "Lords or Capitalists? The Natchez Nabobs in Comparative Perspective," *Journal of Mississippi History* 54, no. 3 (1992): 239-267.

¹⁷⁶ Scarborough, *Masters of the Big House*. See also, Shulman, "The Bingamans of Natchez." Shulman uses the Bingamans of Natchez as a case study to understand the pioneering families of Natchez. She argues that they established a support system that held through the beginning of the nineteenth century. Intermarriage solidified this support network. Like Scarborough, she argues that this elite group was also intimately connected to the North, and Bingman clearly believed his interests would be protected by the Union. The family resisted secession. As Shulman's article emphasizes, the elite had formed their own community with its own specific interests.

brought buyers from nearby towns into the city, feeding the city's local economy. As Jim Barnett and H. Clark Burett explain in their discussion of the market, its existence, along with other smaller markets in the two states, promoted a dramatic increase in the number of slaves in Mississippi and Louisiana – from 101,878 in 1820 to 768,357 in 1860.¹⁷⁷ Additionally, the wealthiest planters of Natchez were completely dependent on the slave system, as were their less prosperous counterparts. Merchants and other workers of the city relied on the prosperous trading system made possible by the plantation economy and the institution of slavery.¹⁷⁸ Certainly, many citizens also embraced the notion of paternalism, claiming that slavery was actually better for blacks. Joe Baldwin claimed, “the free negroes in our cities and county, taken as a body, are a mass of vice and idleness.”¹⁷⁹ Hence, Natchezians of all classes embraced the slave system and were sensitive to the attacks of both abolitionists and Free Soilers.

Included in those economic interests were trade networks to both New Orleans and Northern ports. As Scarborough argues, “Nowhere else was there such a concentration of Northern-oriented planters” than in Natchez. They were capitalists with investments across the United States, and many of these men were new to this level of wealth, which peaked with them owning over 250 slaves. They knew that wealth was

¹⁷⁷ Barnett and Burkett, “The Forks of the Road.”

¹⁷⁸ Additionally, as some historians have noted, some men supported the institution of slavery because they feared the possibility of having to compete with freed blacks for jobs, and it offered them a measure of social power otherwise denied to them by wealthier whites. For a discussion of this sentiment in Irish-American soldiers in the Union Army, see Susannah Ural Bruce, *The Harp and the Eagle: Irish-American Volunteers and the Union Army, 1861-1865* (New York: New York University Press, 2006). See also, Ulrich B. Phillips, “The Central Theme of Southern History,” *American Historical Review* 34 (1928): 30-43; and Jeff Forret, *Race Relations at the Margins: Slaves and Poor Whites in the Antebellum Southern Countryside* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2006).

¹⁷⁹ Baldwin to his brother, Bice ----, December 10, 1860. Michael F. Holt argues that by 1860, two republican ideologies had developed, one in the North and one in the South. The South argued that because of slavery, it had a more egalitarian society than that of the North. See, Michael F. Holt, *The Political Crisis of the 1850s* (New York: Wiley, 1978). Many Natchezians certainly argued the slave system was a better system for all its participants.

tenuous, and they had no desire to risk it on war. This elite class remained pro-Union throughout the war, a product of their strong familial, social, and economic ties to the Northeast.¹⁸⁰

Less-prosperous planters and merchants were less connected to the North. Of all the married men in the city, 30 percent were born in a slave state. Forty-one percent were born in a foreign country, and only 20 percent were born in a free state. Unlike in the elite's case, their wives were no more likely. In fact, only 15 percent of their wives were born in a free state, with 35 percent born in a foreign country and 50 percent born in a slave state (see Figures 28 and 29).¹⁸¹ Nonetheless, however, these men also felt connected to the North, as they too relied heavily on those economic ties. Also emphasizing this connection to the North were the magazines and newspapers read by many Natchezians. In addition to local newspapers, civilians read nationally and internationally circulated periodicals, including *Harper's Weekly*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Scientific American*.¹⁸² Natchez was also home to at least two federal facilities, the United States Marine Hospital and a post office, which were undoubtedly beneficial to the city as a source of labor and as a vital link to the rest of the nation. Ties to the North were crucial to the city's economy, making the entire population reliant on them. However, they also became a symbol of status and prestige, giving less-prosperous residents a goal and a reason to maintain their position in the Union, while maintaining their Southern convictions.

¹⁸⁰ Scarborough, *Masters of the Big House*.

¹⁸¹ U.S Bureau of the Census, 1860.

¹⁸² See, William Ashley Vaughan, "Natchez During the Civil War" (PhD diss., University of Southern Mississippi, 2001) and Beth Schweiger, "The Literate South: Reading before Emancipation," *The Journal of the Civil War Era* 3, no. 3 (2013): 331-359.

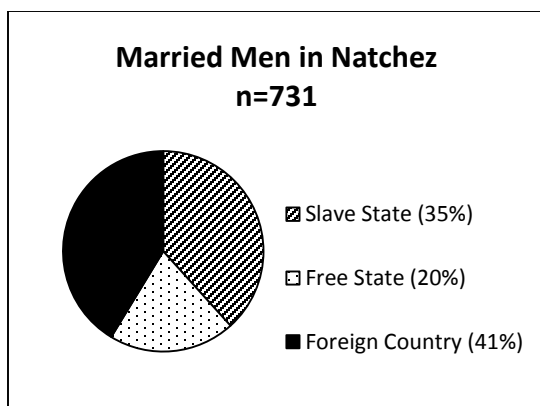


Figure 28. Birthplaces of Married Men in Natchez.

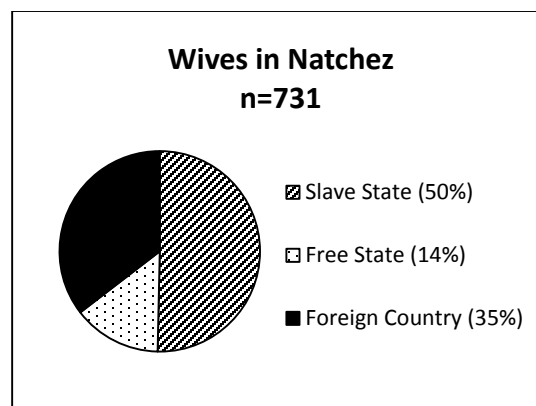


Figure 29. Birthplaces of Wives in Natchez.

As J. F. H. Claiborne's story demonstrates, the spirit of community was powerful enough to keep people returning to the city. Born in Natchez in 1807, Claiborne went to Virginia at the age of eight for school after his father's death. He later returned to Natchez to study with the lawyer John A. Quitman. He then travelled to Cuba and back to Virginia, but he eventually chose to settle in Natchez, marrying a woman from the nearby town of Dunbarton in 1828. He even became the editor of a Jackson newspaper published in Natchez. In 1835, Claiborne became a state congressman and moved to Madison County near Jackson. Following his term, he spent time in Cuba, New Orleans, and Bay St. Louis, where he resisted secession and lived throughout the war. After the war, however, Claiborne received the news that he was terminally ill. Significantly, he chose to return to Natchez, where he died in 1884.¹⁸³ Natchez was and had always been his true home.

Many Natchezians were also motivated to resist disunion for ideological reasons. Like many Northerners, they believed disunion would destroy the hopes of the founding fathers to establish a strong, successful republican government. As Joe Baldwin told his

¹⁸³ Clayton Rand, *Men of Spine in Mississippi*. (Gulfport, MS: The Dixie Press, 1940).

brother, “in the course of time this ‘blessed union’ we have so long boasted of, would probably be cut up into little sovereignties and powers . . . which would be in fact realizing the predictions of European Governments.”¹⁸⁴

This combination of ideological, economic, and social reasons for maintaining the Union led Natchez to oppose secession. In the 1860 presidential election, the majority vote, with 448 votes, went to Constitutional Unionist John Bell, who locals saw as committed to preserving the Union. Also in an attempt to preserve the Union, 158 votes went to Democrat Stephen A. Douglas. In contrast, 376 votes went to Democrat John C. Breckinridge, seen as unwilling to compromise on the issue of slavery. Republican Abraham Lincoln was not on the ballot.¹⁸⁵ Clearly, slavery was not the only issue to consider in Natchez.¹⁸⁶ William C. Ker illustrated this point when he commented on Lincoln’s election, “I hope the Natchez people . . . do not talk about seceding before they have had any cause for secession, and even before Lincoln has the power to injure them, if he would, which I do not believe.”¹⁸⁷ At the secession convention, Natchezians voted overwhelmingly against secession, 1,072 to 233.¹⁸⁸ One Natchezian explained, “should the Southern States *decide* upon secession under all circumstances, I do not believe, that their general interest or happiness would be consummated.”¹⁸⁹ Natchez’s commitment to Northern investments and relationships, and their hopes that the two regions would be

¹⁸⁴ Baldwin to his brother, Bice ----, December 10, 1860.

¹⁸⁵ *Natchez Daily Free Trader*, November 12, 1860.

¹⁸⁶ Historians like William J. Cooper in *The South and the Politics of Slavery, 1828-1856* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978) argue that slavery was the dominant issue considered in Southern politics. Although Natchezians certainly considered it, to them, economic issues appear to have been just as important.

¹⁸⁷ William H. Ker to Mary Susan Ker, November 11, 1860, Mary Susan Ker Papers, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, quoted in Vaughn, “Natchez During the Civil War.”

¹⁸⁸ *Natchez Daily Free Trader*, December 24, 1860.

¹⁸⁹ Baldwin to his brother, Bice ----, December 10, 1860.

able to compromise, reigned supreme over the city's Southern ideology. Natchezians were sectionalists, not secessionists.

Despite their efforts, on January 9, 1861, Mississippi seceded, and the citizens of Natchez had little choice but to cope with that decision. Not surprisingly, there was very little celebration in the city. The *Natchez Courier* blamed "the wild madness of partizans of the South, who ever hating the Union, have precipitated the cotton states into revolution."¹⁹⁰ Its editors and other Natchezians hoped the state would be able to leave peacefully, and they believed that the North had driven the South to leave the Union. T. Otis Baker argued, "They have been inconsistent and untrue to their fathers and their fathers' principles. We could not obtain the proper observance of our rights, and justice to ourselves and property, as well as honor demanded that we bid our countrymen farewell."¹⁹¹ Natchezians, like Baker, had never been pro-North. Rather, they had embraced the Union and the opportunities it had provided. However, they believed that the South was fundamentally superior to the North, as it had upheld the goals of the founding fathers. Temporarily abandoning unionism, such men and their families came to believe that separating themselves from the "corruption" in the North would be the only way American ideology and the goals of the founders would survive. In this way, Natchezians were no different from most whites across the state, which, Timothy Smith argues in *Mississippi in the Civil War*, had a will to fight and believed they were following in the footsteps of the nation's founding generation by struggling for their independence.¹⁹² They, like many Southerners, began to embrace Confederate

¹⁹⁰ *Natchez Daily Courier*, January 23, 1861.

¹⁹¹ T. Otis Baker journal October 5, 1863, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 12.

¹⁹² Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*. For more on these beliefs in the South, see also Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism* and McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*.

nationalism and believed that both duty and honor called on them to support the South. For Natchezians, however, that support was tenuous.

They had more in common with and were more connected to Northerners than the majority of Southerners. Like in the North, commercialism was a central facet of daily life in the city, a quality often deemed corrupt by other Southerners.¹⁹³ Allowing them to cope with this contradiction was Natchezians' belief that God was in control, a conviction they shared with most other nineteenth-century white Americans. For them, that included their prosperity, leaving them to conclude that capitalism was not inherently corrupt. Rather, they believed that the "degeneracy" in the North was a product of politicians and other individuals who, as Baker explained, "intended to inflame the Northern mind against us by exciting their worst passions and most bitter prejudices."¹⁹⁴

In their minds, such politicians had led the North away from the ideals of the American Revolution and were to blame for Northern attacks on the institution of slavery as well as the war itself. Tellingly, some Natchezians even referred to these leaders as *black* republicans, linking them to the abolitionists and racism. They believed these corrupt leaders sought ultimate governmental power by tricking the public, at the expense of Southern ideals. In reference to Lincoln in particular, T. Otis Baker lamented "those once unpolluted halls [as having] become the habitation of the usurper and his vile minions!"¹⁹⁵ This conviction allowed many Natchezians to agree with Joe Baldwin when

¹⁹³ For a discussion of this and other contradictions in Confederate ideology, see Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism* and McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*.

¹⁹⁴ T. Otis Baker journal September 27, 1863, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 11.

¹⁹⁵ T. Otis Baker journal October 8, 1863, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 12.

he said, “I do believe that nine-tenth of the North are in favor of the South.”¹⁹⁶ They believed both sections were against the war.

Immediately following secession, supporting Mississippi’s decision was the most logical conclusion. Even Northerners who had settled in the area saw themselves as citizens of the state, and they believed they had a duty to uphold secession. Their honor was at stake. As T. Otis Baker explained, “Tis a delightful calm which broods over a mind conscious of having voluntarily done its duty. It is a pleasure not to be exchanged for any other . . . All other considerations should vanish before that of duty.”¹⁹⁷ Even though they had not seen the action as necessary, Natchezians believed they had a duty to support the state’s fundamental *right* to secede, and they were determined to defend it as long as their hardships were kept to a minimum.

Of course, in 1861, many Mississippians, including Natchezians and Vicksburgians, believed the war would be short.¹⁹⁸ April 1862, John A. Cato of Natchez told his wife, “we will whip the Yankees pretty soon, or they will whip us, I have not a doubt in my mind.”¹⁹⁹ He believed victory was imminent. These citizens did not anticipate any serious or long-term effects on their economy, so supporting the Confederacy was the best option for protecting their interests and solidifying their future should the South succeed. But that allegiance was tenuous in Natchez; as early as October 1861, one soldier complained of his impatience for the war’s slow pace by saying the soldiers “are all anxious to be thrown upon the enemy and allowed to fight it

¹⁹⁶ Baldwin to his brother, Bice ----, December 10, 1860.

¹⁹⁷ T. Otis Baker journal, September 1, 1863, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 11.

¹⁹⁸ Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*.

¹⁹⁹ John. A. Cato to his wife, Martha, April 20, 1862, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

out at once.”²⁰⁰ He was worried about Natchez’s future in the war, and he feared for his family’s safety. Indeed, he was much more concerned about Mississippi’s defense than any other states’, and he was growing suspicious about the Confederacy’s ability to protect the state. The Union’s blockade of the Southern coast had begun, and he was not the only Natchezian who felt this way. Unionist sentiments, as well as the desire to compromise, only heightened this reservation.

Initially, Natchez supported the war effort, but it did so as a community, in an effort to protect *Natchez’s* interests.²⁰¹ To support soldiers’ families when they went to war, locals established the Free Market and the Military Aid Society.²⁰² At least twelve companies mobilized for war; however, five of these were home guard. Not surprisingly, most of these enlisted men were born in a slave state, but with an 11 percent enlistment rate, the military age men of Natchez were also far less likely to enlist than those of Vicksburg, a fact that emphasized the more individualistic nature of this younger city (see Figures 30 and 31).²⁰³ Natchezian men were more likely to have families, making their

²⁰⁰ Letter to my dear sister ----, October 31, 1861, James Alexander Ventress and family papers, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

²⁰¹ Vaughn’s dissertation on Natchez during the Civil War contends that Natchezians supported the war effort until Union occupation, to the point that they “constituted a dry run for modern total war” (130). He contends that they began balancing their support of the Union and the Confederacy only after the surrender. There are, however, some problems with his argument. First, and most importantly, he contends that Natchez was the final river port to surrender, following Vicksburg and Port Hudson. In reality, Natchez surrendered a full year *before* Vicksburg and Port Hudson, in 1862 (although Union troops did not occupy the city until 1863). The actual date directs attention to the tenuous nature of this support. The strength of Vaughn’s work is in his decision to use two volunteer companies as a case study of the city’s response to the war, but at times, he becomes too focused on the two companies, as his sources indicate. His conclusions on civilian support are highly reliant on two sources, *The Natchez Daily Courier* and *the Natchez Free Trader*, which he supplements with family papers. Shifting the focus to family papers, coupled with considering the correct surrender date, I argue, demonstrates that Natchezians were focused on the interests of their city throughout the war. They supported the Confederacy only when it fit their interests, but that support was tenuous. And it was always a balancing act. See, Vaughn, “Natchez During the Civil War.”

²⁰² *Natchez Daily Courier*, December 1861.

²⁰³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. Twenty-nine percent of the Natchez population was eligible for enlistment (men aged fifteen to forty-five in 1860).

decision to enlist much more difficult. Only 21 percent, compared to Vicksburg's twenty percent, of Natchez enlisted men were married.²⁰⁴ This similarity is striking, considering Natchez's much higher marriage rates. Ultimately, 8 percent of the military age Natchez men born in a free state, and only 5 percent of the men born in a foreign country enlisted. Even more significantly, only 16 percent of men born in a slave state and 19 percent of men born in Mississippi enlisted (see Figures 33, 34, 35, and 36). On all counts, these percentages were less than those of Vicksburg.²⁰⁵ These men wanted to ensure Natchez's future prosperity; enlistment was not necessarily the answer.

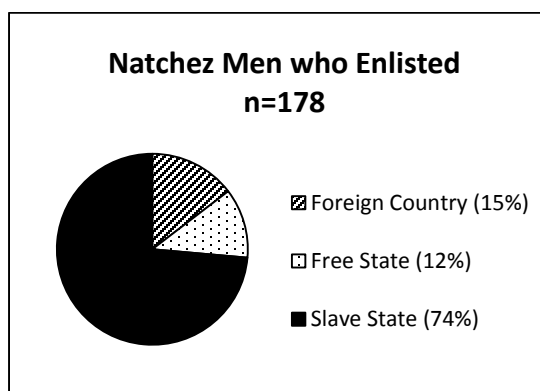


Figure 30. Birthplaces of Natchez Men who Enlisted.

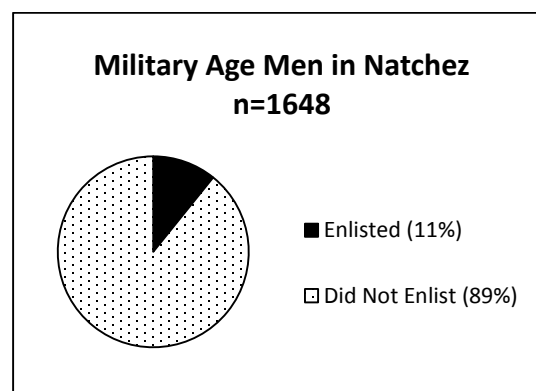


Figure 31. Military Age Men who Enlisted in Natchez.

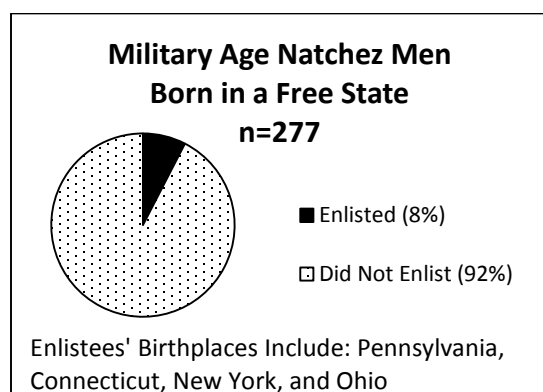


Figure 32. Men Born in a Free State who Enlisted in Natchez.

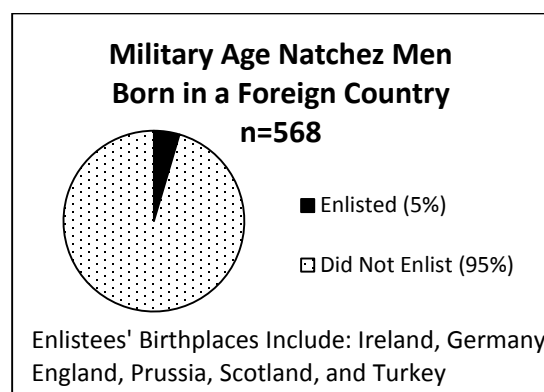


Figure 33. Men Born in a Foreign Country who Enlisted in Natchez.

²⁰⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. 12 percent of Natchez enlisted men had at least one child.

²⁰⁵ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

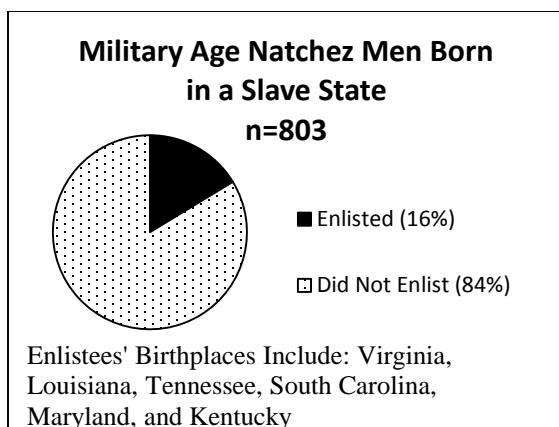


Figure 34. Men Born in a Slave State who Enlisted in Natchez.

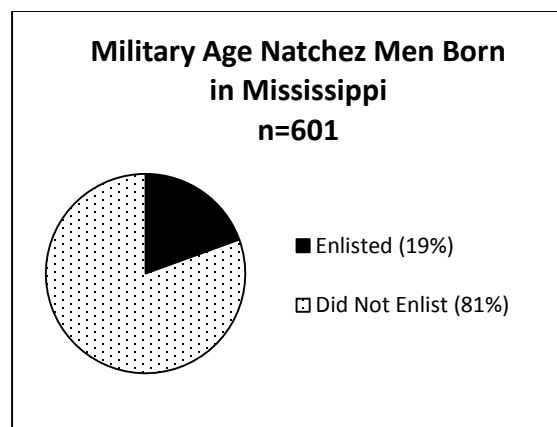


Figure 35. Men Born in Mississippi who Enlisted in Natchez.

Some enlisted men from Natchez were fervent supporters of the war effort. Even as late as March 1863, Samuel Blanch Moore claimed he was willing to die to protect his family from the “Yankees.” Commenting on Vicksburg’s surrender later that year, he explained that it “cast a gloom over all us Mississippians but we have renewed our energies and are ready for the conflict again.”²⁰⁶ For Moore and his like-minded comrades, the Confederacy had become their new nation, and they had to defend its independence at all costs. He even advised his wife to endure the Union troops with patience. In this way, he was more like the Vicksburg soldiers discussed in Chapter I. Like them, he looked to his family and to God as his source of support and solace. They alone allowed him to “bear the hardships.”²⁰⁷ Men like Moore, however, were a minority in Natchez. Unlike most of his neighbors, he viewed his interests as *purely* Southern, emphasized by his final request to his wife to give his “love to all the negroes.”²⁰⁸ He saw himself as a patriarchal ruler first and a businessman second.

²⁰⁶ Samuel Blanch Moore to his wife, March 23 and July 12, 1863, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

²⁰⁷ Moore to his wife, March 23, 1863.

²⁰⁸ Moore to his wife, July 12, 1863.

In contrast, most Natchezian soldiers spent much of their free time writing about money. In fact, there were only two topics discussed more, how much they missed their families and daily life at war. N. T. Broughen complained that the Army had used one of his slaves, Tom, to carry a wagon full of supplies to the train depot. He argued that they had sent him in the rain with no extra clothes or blankets, risking his health. Tom had risked the possibility of being captured, and they had used Broughen's wagon, to the point that it needed costly repairs. Despite his concern for his slave, however, Broughen was most upset that the Confederacy had promised "to pay [him] a little over two dollars per day – [which] would not pay the insurance on the property for the time considering the risk."²⁰⁹ He wanted five dollars per day for the time and for the use of his wagon. Even at war, Broughen was attempting to negotiate prices, trying to benefit from the war and the Confederacy as much as possible. He further asked his correspondent to send Ella, who was presumably a family member, seventy-five dollars for her well-being. Broughen did not discuss the war; rather, the crisis offered a backdrop for discussions of money.²¹⁰ He was one of the most extreme examples of this focus on money, but this issue was clearly a persistent concern for most Natchezians. They certainly expected the Confederacy to pay the money it had promised them. As John Cato lamented, "our quarter-master has not gone after our money yet."²¹¹

Most Natchezians who enlisted had much more at stake than their Vicksburg counterparts, and the Confederacy was not necessarily the best outlet for protecting the prosperity of either city. Both cities relied on trade networks throughout the country, but

²⁰⁹ N. T. Broughen to Charles, January 7, 1863, William H. McCardle Papers. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 1.

²¹⁰ Broughen to Charles, January 7, 1863, 2.

²¹¹ John A Cato to his wife, Martha, March 27, 1862. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

unlike Vicksburgians, the citizens of Natchez were a part of a *community* reliant on those networks. Natchezians only supported the Confederacy as long as it was the best option for protecting their interests and their values, as Southerners, businessmen, and a close-knit community.

Significantly, Natchez enlisted men also had more money at stake. Thirty-seven percent of enlisted men reported no assets on the U.S. Census Record, and the amounts they reported were far more varied and exceeded those reported by their Vicksburg counterparts (see Figures 36, 37, 38, and 39).²¹² With no reason to believe the Confederacy would fail in its bid for independence, these men enlisted. After all, they believed the South had a right to secede, and even if they had resisted and the South succeeded, their decision might have cost them their prosperity. It was the best option for protecting their interests, at least initially.

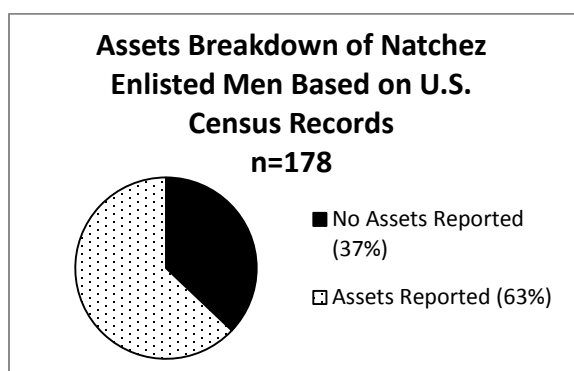


Figure 36. Assets Breakdown of Natchez Enlisted Men.²¹³

²¹² U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. In as striking contrast, 61 percent of Vicksburg enlisted men reported no assets.

²¹³ “Assets” refers to two categories listed on the U.S. census record in 1860, “Value of Real Estate” and the “Value of Personal Estate.” U.S. Bureau of the Census.

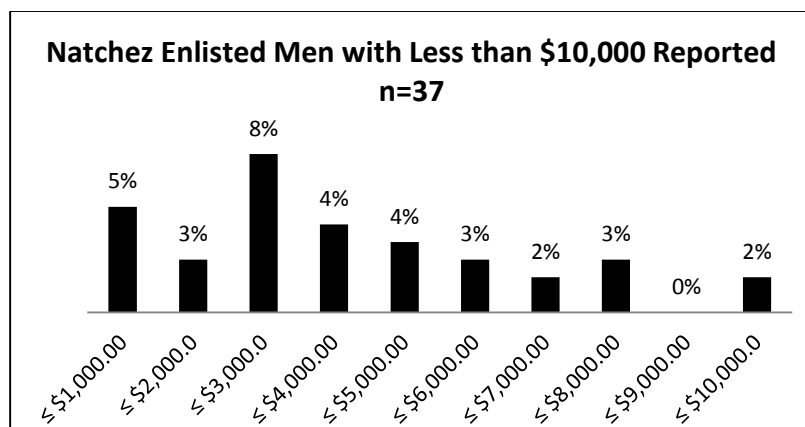


Figure 37. Breakdown of Natchez Enlisted Men who Reported Less than \$10,000.

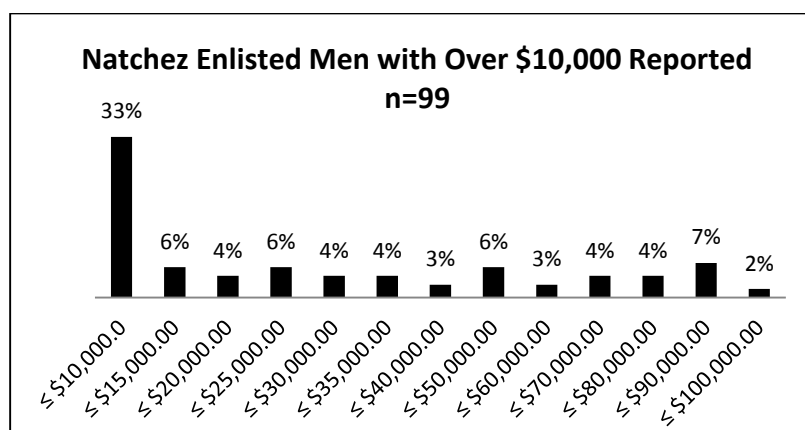


Figure 38. Breakdown of Natchez Enlisted Men who Reported Over \$10,000.

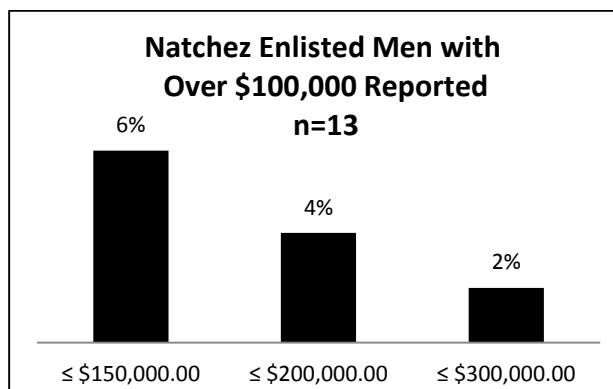


Figure 39. Breakdown of Natchez Enlisted Men who Reported Over \$100,000.²¹⁴

²¹⁴ As William Scarborough explains in *Masters of the Big House*, particularly the largest slaveholders often reported assets in multiple counties. These percentages are a *minimum* estimate based on the census record of Natchez alone.

As John Cato further exhibited, part of this concern for money was out of worry for his family members still in the city. Cato worried that his father-in-law had been forced to pay his taxes to the Confederacy with his stash of cotton. Of course, this worry could only have tested what little acceptance of Confederate nationalism had already occurred. Natchezian soldiers clearly worried about the safety of their families in their absence, and they were more likely than the men of Vicksburg to have a pre-existing family. This fact alone was a major consideration before men marched off for war, and it persisted throughout their enlistment. Although the marriage rates of enlisted men from both cities were comparable, 52 percent of Natchez enlisted men, compared to Vicksburg's 31 percent, were still living with at least one parent in 1860. Additionally, even the men who were not married and were not still living with their parents were members of this family-oriented community, which would have shaped their decisions, as well. As in Vicksburg's case, some of the men already had sweethearts, and others were certainly planning to settle in the area. They had developed relationships with their neighbors and co-workers prior to enlistment, and they wanted to maintain those associations, even during war. One of John Cato's neighbors' emphasized this sentiment through his diligent efforts to join Cato's company in 1862.²¹⁵ He wanted to be with his friends.

The fact that many men in Natchez were still living with their parents is especially striking, as their ages were not that different from the enlisted men of Vicksburg. The largest age group included men aged twenty to twenty-four, just like in Vicksburg. In fact the only significant difference was that the oldest man in Natchez was forty-eight

²¹⁵ Cato to his wife, March 27, 1862.

years old, and Vicksburg's was sixty. Otherwise, the distributions were remarkably similar (see Table 2 and Figure 40).²¹⁶ The men of Natchez remained with their parents for much longer, which emphasized the existence of a community and also served to stabilize that community.

Table 2.

Natchez Enlistee's Age Distribution.

Age Distribution:	Total	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Under 15	7	3.9%	3.9%
15-19	43	24.2%	28.1%
20-24	55	30.9%	59.0%
25-29	35	19.7%	78.7%
30-34	12	6.7%	85.4%
35-39	14	7.9%	93.3%
40-44	9	5.1%	98.4%
45-49	3	1.7%	100%
TOTAL	178	100%	100%

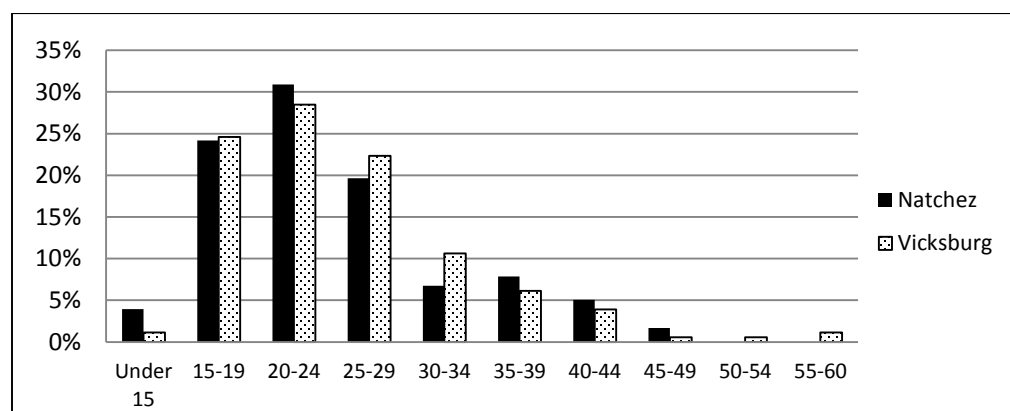


Figure 40. Comparison of Vicksburg and Natchez Ages of Enlistment.

²¹⁶ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. The youngest enlisted man was twelve in 1860, and he was born in Mississippi, probably Natchez. The oldest man was born in Pennsylvania. Most men who enlisted and were born in free state were typically older and between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine, totaling 33 percent of those born in a free state. In contrast, those born in a foreign country had the greatest variability in their ages and tended to be between the ages of twenty and twenty-nine, totaling 46 percent of those born in a foreign country. Most men born in a slave state were between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine, totaling 78 percent of the men born in a slave state. The average enlisted man in both cities was twenty-five years old in 1860.

Natchez's enlisted men filled their letters with appeals to their family's health and well-being. As John Cato lamented to his wife, "I would give anything to see you my love and hope ere long to show myself in person; give my love to all and accept a double portion yourself."²¹⁷ The men of Vicksburg also inquired after their families but not to the same degree. The Vicksburg enlisted men needed their families' support, and correspondence offered them self-assurance and a degree of pride. The enlisted men of Natchez just wanted to return home, and that was their focus. They stayed because they had made a commitment and believed both duty and honor compelled them to continue fighting.²¹⁸ But as Cato stated in March 1862, "I do not think a single man of this Reg[iment] will reenlist unless things greatly change."²¹⁹ As the war continued, these men gradually came to believe that the Confederacy was not protecting their interests, and their energies would be better spent at home.

Like duty and honor, however, their Christian faith helped enlisted men stay, and they were no different than their Vicksburg counterparts in this way. On February 27, 1862, John A. Cato demonstrated the power of this faith. That morning, he joined his company on a train headed to Tennessee from New Orleans. Unfortunately, as they were travelling, "a train of cars loaded with very heavy timbers came meeting the train we were on."²²⁰ He estimated that at least twenty men lost their lives. Cato began by thanking God for his life, but the episode clearly shook him. He believed he had seen the

²¹⁷ Cato to his wife, March 27, 1862.

²¹⁸ McPherson's *For Cause and Comrades* points to ideology as the driving force for enlistments. Liberty, duty, and honor compelled men to enlist, and it kept them fighting throughout the war. Although Vicksburg men fit this argument, Natchez men could only embrace those ideas as long as they believed the Confederacy was protecting their interests at home.

²¹⁹ Cato to his wife, March 27, 1862.

²²⁰ John A. Cato, to his wife, Martha, February 27, 1862. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 1.

worst event imaginable, and he was painfully aware that he could die at any moment, even outside of combat. After this discussion, he began brainstorming about the ways he could return home to visit his wife, concluding with a resolution to “fight for our rights and liberties.”²²¹ Cato was ready to go home; writing the letter and prayer allowed him to process the tragedy. He believed God had and would continue taking care of him, as long as he had faith. Similarly, Samuel Blanch Moore resolved himself to the possibility of death by concluding he would see his family again in heaven, and he advised his wife to trust in the Lord and endure the Union troops in the area. “We have a great comforter to bear us up in our trials and afflictions.”²²²

Natchezian men were Southerners, and they believed the South had a right to secede. Seventy-four percent of them had been born in a slave state; even more strikingly, 84 percent of enlisted men were connected to a slave state through birth or family (see Figures 41 and 42).²²³ These percentages were much higher than those of Vicksburg. The difference could be traced to the differences in Vicksburg’s foreign-born population. Only 23 percent of Natchez enlisted men were connected to a foreign country, and only 25 percent were connected to a free state (see Figures 43 and 44).²²⁴ These men embraced Southern ideals. However, one major difference in the two city’s enlisted men is important. While only 49 percent of Vicksburg’s were specifically connected to Mississippi through birth or family, 76 percent of those of Natchez were connected (see Figure 45).²²⁵ Natchezian soldiers had more than Southern values to

²²¹ Cato to his wife, February 27, 1862, 1.

²²² Moore to his wife, July 12, 1863.

²²³ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. Remember, 60 percent of Vicksburg’s enlisted men were connected to a slave state, and only 53 percent were actually born in a slave state.

²²⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860. 41 percent of Vicksburg enlisted men were connected to a foreign country, and 23 percent were connected to a free state.

²²⁵ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

consider in this fight for “independence.” They were Mississippians, and more importantly, they were part of a Southern community in Natchez. They were linked to the North, even if that link was not familial; and the city’s prosperity and that of its community depended on it.

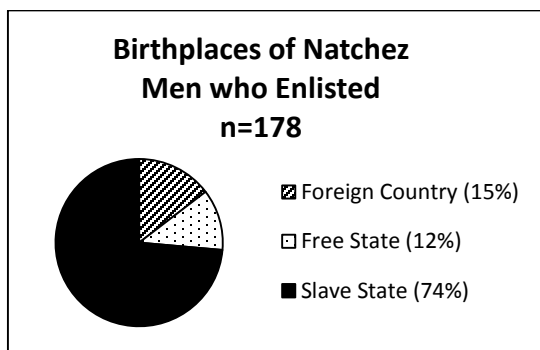


Figure 41. Birthplaces of Natchez Men who Enlisted.²²⁶

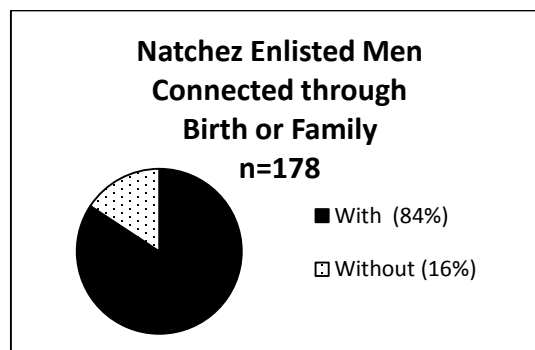


Figure 42. Natchez Enlisted Men Connected to Slave States.

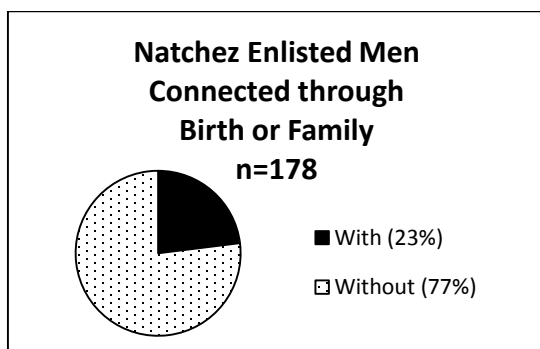


Figure 43. Natchez Enlisted Men Connected to Foreign Countries.

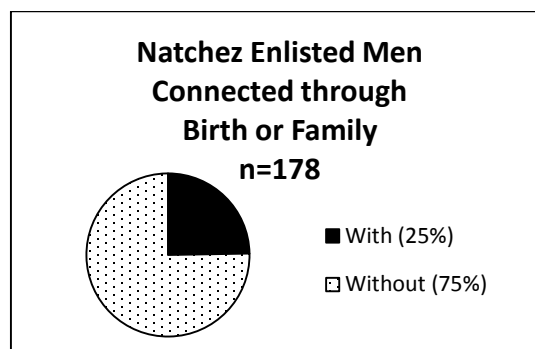


Figure 44. Natchez Enlisted Men Connected to Free States.

²²⁶ As in Chapter I, for the purposes of this study, the term “family” is a reference to the nuclear family. It includes parents, siblings, wives, and children. Connections are based on family members’ birthplaces, based on the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

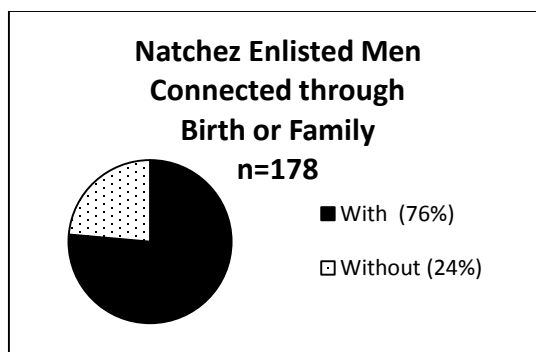


Figure 45. Natchez Enlisted Men Connected to Mississippi.

Natchez's enlisted men were worried about the future of their city. Emphasizing the significance of education to the community, Archibald Smith mourned the young men who would be uneducated as a result of this war. He advised his son to study hard, so he could be of use when the war ended. Significantly, he never suggested his son join the army; rather, Archibald wanted his son to be prepared to serve Natchez.²²⁷ Outnumbered by slaves in their city, white Natchezians also greatly feared slave insurrections, and this fear could not have disappeared when men left for war. In fact, it probably grew, as so many men were no longer at home to protect their families. As Justin Behrend explains in "Rebellious Talk and Conspiratorial Plots," both slaves and free blacks were just as excited by the war as the whites. For them, it was an opportunity for freedom. White Natchezians certainly felt this growing excitement and feared its ramifications, as exemplified by a slave conspiracy scare in 1863.²²⁸ The Confederacy was not protecting them from these problems; in fact, these men and women may have even seen it as the culprit. Regardless, they believed they would have to preserve their own interests.

²²⁷ Archibald Smith to his son, February 6, 1863. Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

²²⁸ For a discussion of these slaves, the events leading up the scare, and the scare itself, see, Justin Behrend, "Rebellious Talk and Conspiratorial Plots."

Problems like disease in the soldiers' camps and the inability to receive furloughs only heightened this desire to return home.

Also drawing these men home was the fact that most of these men had found work in the city, and, like their Vicksburg counterparts, they did not need to enlist to find a reliable source of income. Only 28 percent of Natchezian soldiers listed no occupation in 1860. The rest of the men listed twenty-five different occupations, with clerk and farmer being the two most frequent listings. Less frequent, but still fairly popular were carpenter and merchant.²²⁹ Ultimately, fifty men listed no occupation, while twenty-four listed clerk; twenty-five listed farmer. Eleven men listed carpenter, and ten listed merchant. Other occupations included artist, bookkeeper, newspaper editor, physician, student, and wagon maker. Interestingly, two Natchez enlisted men listed "city defense" as their occupation. No Vicksburg enlisted man did the same. Natchez's men were fighting for the city, not the South at large.

The difference between Natchez and Vicksburg enlisted men, of course, was the fact that Natchezians were less motivated by southern ideology. Their loyalty was to their city. Working within and for the betterment of that community was part of that commitment. Serving to emphasize this difference in commitments was a striking contrast between the number of "laborers" and "farmers" who enlisted in the two cities. While Vicksburg only had three men list farmer, Natchez had twenty-five. In contrast, thirteen Vicksburg men and only four men from Natchez listed "laborer."²³⁰ These differences, and the assets that have already been discussed, emphasized the fact that more Natchezians than Vicksburgians were property-holders, which would have offered

²²⁹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

²³⁰ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

them yet another reason to defend the interests of their locale, either for or against the South.

Civilians in Natchez were supportive of the South – as long as it was protecting their interests. The main way they demonstrated this support was by sending supplies, particularly clothes, to their soldiers. Like Vicksburg, enlisted men frequently thanked their families for new socks, jackets, pants, and shirts. Their gratitude is not surprising, as Natchezian women organized sewing bees to satisfy the soldiers' requests. By late 1861, the ladies had made at least 1,000 blankets, 800 undergarments, 1,300 shirts, and 500 pairs of pants to send to Virginia.²³¹ Likewise, men like G. Malin Davis donated rifles and uniforms for Natchez companies preparing for war.²³² In April 1862, students of the Natchez Institute even organized a fundraiser to collect hospital supplies, and some of the city's civilians went to Corinth to act as doctors and nurses for incoming Confederate casualties.²³³

Natchezian civilians also supported the war effort by providing for the families who sent soldiers to the front, an action that emphasized their commitment to their community. The Free Market and the Military Aid Society were both established for this purpose. Fundraisers, like the one held on November 5, 1861 at the Institute Hall featuring local performers, were another way for civilians to support soldiers and their families. This particular campaign raised at least \$600.²³⁴ As in the soldiers' case, religion was an important component of this continued support of the troops, but it did

²³¹ *Natchez Daily Courier*, November 27 and December 4, 1861.

²³² *Natchez Daily Free Trader*, December 24, 1860.

²³³ *Natchez Daily Courier*, April 22 and 26, and May 1, 1862.

²³⁴ *Natchez Daily Courier*, November 7, 1861.

not keep civilians from writing to their families about how much they missed them or needed them at home. And it did not prevent them from experiencing wartime hardship.

Not surprisingly, skepticism about the war emerged earlier in Natchez than it did in Vicksburg and Mississippi at large.²³⁵ As Timothy Smith argues, most Mississippians did not lose the will to fight until late 1863 when the Union Army was able to march unchecked across the state.²³⁶ A year earlier, though, in 1862 and early 1863, Natchez's allegiance to the Confederacy had already begun to crumble. Even in 1861, Natchez had experienced more problems recruiting than Vicksburg.²³⁷ By 1862, those who had joined, like other Union and Confederate soldiers, had experienced war and were disillusioned by the reality of combat.²³⁸ Additionally, however, the letters of such soldiers from Natchez depict men who wanted nothing more than to return home, and although they hoped for victory, peace was paramount. Some men briefly discussed camp life, but otherwise, they rarely even mentioned the war. Rather, they focused on their families and on life at home. Samuel Blanch Moore exclaimed about his wife in March 1863, "The only enjoyment I have now is in communicating with one, the only one, that clings around my heart and makes me want to live to get home again."²³⁹

²³⁵ For more on the specific ways Natchezians *supported* the war effort, see Vaughn, "Natchez During the Civil War." Although this thesis does not discuss the ways women in particular began to undermine the war effort in Natchez, women were certainly vital components to this skepticism. For discussions on how women re-shaped the war effort and became increasingly disillusioned, see, Drew Gilpin Faust, *Mothers of Invention: Women of the Slaveholding South in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); George C. Rable, *Civil Wars: Women and the Crisis of Southern Nationalism* (Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1991); and McCurry, *Confederate Reckoning*. While Rable contends that women increasingly sought self-preservation and began begging their husbands to return home, McCurry adds a vital element by demonstrating the reasons women began pushing their husbands to return, the most of important of which was their belief that men had a responsibility to their households, an understanding they had developed in the antebellum period.

²³⁶ Smith, *Mississippi in the Civil War*.

²³⁷ As Vaughn explains in his dissertation, only two Natchez companies "were not under strength." See, Vaughn, "Natchez During the Civil War," 37.

²³⁸ For a discussion of the factors that motivated soldiers to enlist and remain in the Army and on the battlefield, see McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*.

²³⁹ Moore to his wife, March 23, 1863.

Natchezians had clear reasons for their skepticism. From the moment Mississippi seceded, they feared the South would not be able to protect their interests. They certainly believed the Union had corrupt leaders and that the South had been, as T. Otis Baker put it, “precipitated into a revolution.”²⁴⁰ However, he, like most other Natchezians feared the potential for corruption in all governmental powers. Baker went so far as to list the laws, rulers, and actions throughout history he believed had been corrupt, including the Pope and the fall of the Franks. Referencing both Northern and Southern leaders, he argued that “men of no capacity whose only aim is personal aggrandizement and not the public welfare, would have no incentive for mingling in public concerns.”²⁴¹ Even more specifically, Baker pointed to what he saw as President Jefferson Davis’ stubbornness in pursuing actions that most Southerners opposed, and he feared potential enslavement not just by Northern leaders but by all politicians. By October 1863, his suspicions shifted to distrust, as he complained, “he who is two faced and accustomed to double dealing will eventually be found out and will be rewarded with humiliation and disgrace.”²⁴² He was absolutely convinced the Confederacy did not have his or his neighbors’ best interests in mind. As the *Natchez Daily Courier* explained, “we are in the midst of a revolution; and at present, are governed by an oligarchy of Ninety-Nine.”²⁴³

²⁴⁰ Baker journal, October 8, 1863, 12.

²⁴¹ Baker Journal, September 1, 1863, 11.

²⁴² Baker Journal, October 16, 1863, 12. Paul D. Escott’s *After Secession* argues that one of the primary causes for waning loyalty in the South was Jefferson’ Davis’ failure to address the many problems confronting average Southerners and that locals increasingly turned to their states for support. See Escott, *After Secession: Jefferson Davis and the Failure of Confederate Nationalism* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1978). Both Vicksburgians and Natchezians blamed Davis for many of the problems confronting them on the home front during the war, although ironically, Natchezians became some of his most ardent supporters during Reconstruction, demonstrating a major shift in their perception of the South and the Union through Union occupation. For more favorable discussions of Jefferson’ Davis’ presidency, see, William C. Davis, *Jefferson Davis: The Man and His Hour, A Biography* (New York: Harper Collins, 1991) and William J. Cooper, *Jefferson Davis, American* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000)

²⁴³ *Natchez Daily Courier*, January 22, 1861.

Reasoning for this fear of federal power was simple; for the most part, Natchez had been locally controlled. The federal government's influence was small; it was limited to the post office and the Marine Hospital, both of which benefited the city.²⁴⁴ At the state level, the city also housed a poor house and a state hospital. Otherwise, the city had been left to govern itself, and Natchezians had no desire to relinquish that control. Inevitably, however, the war destroyed that local control by breaking their trade networks, disrupting local social institutions, and through the Confederacy's need to persecute the war effort, including through such ordinances as the one that ordered planters to burn their cotton supplies. The war, and therefore the Confederacy, had a direct, negative effect on Natchez's economy and local power. For a city that prioritized these two qualities, the Confederacy had utterly failed to protect the city's interests, and to Natchezians, it had proved it was corrupt. The Union, at least, had left them alone.

Fearing for their economy, of course, Natchezians had voted against secession, and the Confederacy did not alleviate those fears. Of the twenty items listed on T. Otis Baker's list of corrupt laws, persons, and actions, the five most specific dealt with money. For example, he included "tithes instituted in England," and "revenues of German governments."²⁴⁵ The fact that many soldiers discussed money problems as a direct result of the war, only confirmed their fears that the Confederacy would not be able to protect their interests. As one man explained to his sister, "the merchants of this city are without money or credit, and will remain so until the blockade is raised and cotton allowed to be shipped to foreign countries."²⁴⁶ Baker further emphasized Natchezians'

²⁴⁴ See, Vaughn, "Natchez During the Civil War."

²⁴⁵ Baker journal, September 1, 1863, 11.

²⁴⁶ Letter to my dear sister, October 31, 1861, James Alexander Ventress and family papers.

complaints, as he took the time to write, “Riches seldom produce happiness or contentment but the contrary, the love of them is one of the principal source of unhappiness among mankind. ‘Money’ occupies far too much space in our plans and deliberations. We ought to watchfully guard ourselves against its insidious influence.”²⁴⁷

Slavery was an important part of this disrupted economy. John A. Cato complained to his wife, “If I only could stay at home I would stop [Frank’s] running away.”²⁴⁸ He and other Natchezians like him were worried about their families and believed that they were needed at home to care for them and to maintain order in the slave quarters, a crucial component to their prosperity. Slaves, in contrast, had found a new opportunity for freedom during the war, prompting an increase in their discussions of freedom and rebellion.²⁴⁹ Making matters worse, by 1862, the Forks of the Road Slave Market had been cut off from Virginia and other major slave exporting states in the east, which hurt the market and Natchez’s economy.²⁵⁰

However, Natchezians’ link to the North was also fundamental to their economy. Preserving slavery was not enough, and in some ways, it was a subordinate goal; the city was losing its connection to the North. Natchezians could no longer communicate with any friends or family members living up North, and they could no longer travel there or to foreign countries for vacation, let alone for higher education or for trade.²⁵¹ W.J.E. Parker exclaimed, “our political troubles have caused Ma to relinquish her proposed trip

²⁴⁷ Baker journal, September 1, 1863, 11.

²⁴⁸ J. A. Cato to his wife, Martha, January 30, 1863, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi, 2..

²⁴⁹ See, Behrend, “Rebellious Talk and Conspiratorial Plots.”

²⁵⁰ See Barnett and Burkett, *The Forks of the Road*.”

²⁵¹ See, Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society*.

to Europe – for this year at least.”²⁵² Naturally, the wealthy were more affected by this problem than their less prosperous counterparts, but most Natchezians greatly feared the loss of trade and its implications.

The war also affected the stability of Natchez’s community. Not only were individual families losing men to the war effort, but their social institutions were collapsing as well. Although successful, most of the local schools struggled to stay open, a product of poor wartime funding and the inability to remain fully staffed.²⁵³ The local racetrack completely shut down, and local entertainment became sparse.²⁵⁴ Once again, this problem was an implication of a much larger issue, the disruption of Natchezians’ networks to the North, where many professional entertainers lived. To Natchezians, these issues pointed to the Confederacy’s inability to protect their local interests. Vicksburgians, in contrast, were willing to overlook these problems, as they were much less committed to community.

One final component, New Orleans, Natchez’s primary trading partner, was crucial to the civilians’ livelihoods. Should anything happen to it, Natchez, once again, would suffer. Civilians like Charles D. Stewart watched apprehensively as the Union advanced toward the Crescent City in the spring of 1862. During his visit there on April 20, 1862, he aptly summarized Natchezians’ anxieties, “the Federals are storming the forts below here and if they succeed I am afraid the sugar crop will fall short . . . We have had so many reports about the killed that we don’t know which to believe was in hopes of knowing the particulars by your letter it has no doubt been a fatal battle to Natchez as

²⁵² W.J.E. Parker to Mary Susan Ker, February 26, 1861, Mary Susan Ker Papers, University of North Carolina, quoted in Vaughn, “Natchez During the Civil War,” 92.

²⁵³ For more on how these schools remained open, see, Vaughn, “Natchez During the Civil War.”

²⁵⁴ See, Vaughn, “Natchez During the Civil War.”

well as here.”²⁵⁵ Emphasizing the significance of this city, when New Orleans fell on April 25, 1862, Natchez followed in its footsteps, barely resisting the Union advance.²⁵⁶ The city could not lose New Orleans as a trading partner.

Like many of the 1862 volunteers and draftees described by Kenneth Noe in *Reluctant Rebels*, the men and women of Natchez saw the Confederacy’s fight for independence as secondary to their local needs. Unlike most of those volunteers, however, many Natchezians were also torn between their loyalty to Southern ideals and to the Union, as both were crucial assets to their community.²⁵⁷ The fact that they surrendered with no resistance emphasized their skepticism of the Confederacy’s ability to protect their interests, but the wording of their surrender emphasized this second commitment to Southern ideals when they said, “An unfortified city, an entirely defenseless people, have no alternative but to yield to an irresistible force . . . so far as the city authorities can prevent, there will be no opposition to your possession of the city; they cannot, however, guarantee that your flag shall wave unmolested in the sight of an excited people.”²⁵⁸

Natchezians wanted the ability to trade, and they wanted to be left alone. They no more wanted direct control from the Confederacy than they did from the Union.²⁵⁹ T. Otis Baker even argued that Southerners were like the Puritans in that they needed to

²⁵⁵ Charles D. Stewart to Selah, April 20, 1862, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, Mississippi, 1. Note too, Stewart spent the bulk of his letter discussing business. This quote was the only section that addressed the war, and even it did so in reference to local needs.

²⁵⁶ For the acceptance of surrender terms, see, *Natchez Daily Courier* May 14, 1862. According to Vaughn’s “Natchez During the Civil War,” at least two Natchezian soldiers even went so far as to join the United States Army, completely shifting their support.

²⁵⁷ See, Noe, *Reluctant Rebels*.

²⁵⁸ *Natchez Daily Courier*, May 14, 1862.

²⁵⁹ As Chapter III shows, direct federal control through Union occupation in 1863, led Natchezians to revisit their support of the Confederacy. They truly wanted the ability to make decisions for themselves, no matter which federal power claimed them.

remain part of a larger nation, but that nation needed to leave them to their own devices.²⁶⁰ Natchezians had believed this idea before secession, but they believed they had a duty to Mississippi to support its decision to secede. They were willing to give the Confederacy a chance and supported the war effort, as long as the South seemed able to protect their interests. When it did not, the citizens of Natchez surrendered to the Union.

Ironically, however, Union occupation of the city led many Natchezians to revisit their brief support of the Confederacy. The city's civilians began to see themselves as more religious and more "American" than Northerners, largely a product of their experiences in an occupied city. After the war, this attitude continued to grow as the civilians of Natchez embraced a memory of the conflict that depicted the city as a beacon of nationalistic Confederate fervor that did not exist in 1861 and 1862, a topic discussed in the final chapter of this thesis. In those years, Natchez only embraced Confederate nationalism when it best fit the interests of the city. It vacillated between loyalty to the South and to the Union during the Civil War, until in the end, its loyalty to the Union trumped its tie to the Confederacy.

²⁶⁰ See, Baker journal, October 8, 1863, 14.

CHAPTER IV

‘THE KEY TO THE SOUTH:’ HISTORICAL MEMORY

Historical memory paints a very different picture of the war than that described in the previous two chapters. In reality, most citizens of Vicksburg and Natchez were sectionalists, and they resisted secession to protect their interests in the Union. But after Mississippi seceded, both cities supported the Confederacy. Significantly, however, the extent of this support was much greater in Vicksburg than it was in Natchez, as Natchezians were much more committed to their locale. When the Confederacy no longer seemed able to protect their interests, Natchezians surrendered. Vicksburgians, in contrast, were willing to sacrifice the welfare of their city. With the fall of Natchez in 1862 and Vicksburg in 1863, Union forces instituted the first steps towards bringing the cities back into the Federal fold. Civilian experiences during the war, and in particular, Union occupation, which continued into Reconstruction, led the civilians of both cities to construct a memory of the war that emphasized their contribution to the Southern war effort and depicted them as steadfast beacons of Confederate nationalism.²⁶¹

Vicksburgians emphasized the peak of their resistance by pointing to the forty-seven day siege, an event that finally solidified the white populace as a community, while

²⁶¹ For works that discuss Union occupation and how different regions responded to this period of the war and Reconstruction, see Steven V. Ash, *Middle Tennessee Society Transformed, 1860-1870: War and Peace in the Upper South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1988) and Steven V. Ash, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995). Ash's *When the Yankees Came* in particular fits Vicksburgians' responses who, like Confederates discussed by Ash, defiantly resisted Federal control because they continued to believe the South would be able to push Union troops back, eventually winning their independence. However, problems within the city led to an internal collapse and the rise of bandits, who supported neither the South nor the Union. Eventually, Vicksburgians and other Confederates joined the Union Army in trying to regain control of this situation, showing a desire for peace and reconciliation. For a study of how the Vicksburg campaign was fought and remembered, a topic not addressed in this thesis, see, Christopher Waldrep, *Vicksburg's Long Shadow: The Civil War Legacy of Race and Remembrance* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005).

Natchezians emphasized the *Southern* elements of their city, glossing over the factors that set them apart from most of the South. To them, Natchez had been the perfect example of an antebellum Southern city, filled with genteel Southern ladies, paternalistic fathers and masters, and contented slaves. Secession had disrupted that ideal, but Union occupation and emancipation, they argued, had shattered it. By emphasizing these images, the two cities were able to shift their focus from one phase of the war to the next, from fighting for their independence to fighting for the “superiority” of the white race.

Some changes during occupation were promising. Steamboat traffic resumed, re-opening crucial networks to the North and to New Orleans, and many planters had hidden cotton bales in the countryside in preparation for the future, including men who had openly served the Confederacy. Despite the Union’s decision to blacklist the sale of Confederate cotton, A.K Farrar, the former Confederate provost marshal of Natchez, sold 1,100 bales of cotton to Stephen Duncan, a middleman, in order to reassert himself in the national economy. Other men bribed Federal officers to ship their cotton north.²⁶² Natchez’s social institutions had also been vital to the community prior to the war, and they also resumed. The United States Post Office re-opened in late 1863, which re-established both cities’ connections to the North. Local banks and gathering places like Institute Hall were able to resume their pre-war programs, and local horse-racing returned.²⁶³ There was also an additional advantage to having Union troops in and around the cities. Unlike their Confederate counterparts, Union soldiers had reliable money to spend, which benefited local stores, bankers, brothels, and even lawyers, as inevitably, the level of crime in the city also increased. Local women benefitted from the

²⁶² See, Vaughn, “Natchez During the Civil War.”

²⁶³ *Natchez Daily Courier*, September 25, October 6, October 16, and October 31, 1863.

occupiers as well, with but one example coming from Mary Ann Irvine who baked and sold pies to Union soldiers, which allowed her to purchase a new shawl.²⁶⁴ At least on the surface, Federal troops were an asset to both cities' economies.

The Union Army, however, took full control of the cities. Like civilians in other occupied areas, Vicksburgians and Natchezians were required to take the Oath of Allegiance, and they needed passes to travel in and out of the city. They could not transport goods north without permission, and they lived under martial law, which included curfews and the seizures of property. General Order No. 100 gave the army the right to seize any property deemed necessary for the maintenance of the Union Army, and the Second Confiscation Act of 1862 allowed Federal troops to seize any property used to aid the Confederacy.²⁶⁵ Union soldiers acted both within and outside that law to seize local property. For Natchezians and Vicksburgians, this law was worse than their experiences before they surrendered. Further exacerbating the situation were the dramatically increasing crime rates, a product of both the soldiers' presence and newly freed African Americans. Even some whorehouses, like that of Malvina Matthews, banned Union soldiers from their businesses in order to avoid the crime that often accompanied the men.²⁶⁶ To make matters worse, a bill passed in 1862 required all Southerners who lived in an occupied territory to pay an additional real estate tax or risk immediate confiscation of their lands.

²⁶⁴ Mary Ann Irvine Papers, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

²⁶⁵ See, Smithers, "Profit and Corruption in Civil War Natchez."

²⁶⁶ See, Broussard, "Malvina Matthews;" Broussard, "Occupied Natchez;" Smithers, "Profit and Corruption in Civil War Natchez;" Vaughn, "Natchez During the Civil War;" Christopher Waldrep, "Women, The Civil War, and Legal Culture in Vicksburg Mississippi." *Journal of Mississippi History* 61, no. 2 (1999): 137-147; and Cotton and Giambrone, *Vicksburg and the War*.

Both Vicksburgians and Natchezians became embittered about the Union Army's presence in their cities. Most Vicksburgians, of course, had fought against this presence. They were accustomed to soldiers living in and around their city, but before, they had accepted this hardship as a necessity. They had even been willing to share their limited supplies. Union troops were another matter. The Union Army took what little control the citizens still had of their city, and forcible seizures of their property were regular. Eliza Ann Lanier recollected, "When General Grant's Army came here in 1863, they stripped us of everything we had . . . They left a little sugar in one hogshead and wasted some on the floor where they shoveled it out. That is all my children had to eat for three days."²⁶⁷ She kept a record of everything she lost, including anything her family and slaves had planted, as well as "forty head of mules and horses, twenty head of milch cows, seventy head of dry cattle, besides oxen, over a hundred hogs, one hundred and sixty-five sheep and lots of poultry."²⁶⁸ Confederate Captain Adams and Dr. McAnally "Met federal soldiers stealing out of the [Bowie] yard, with sheets tied up, filled with clothing, silverware, etc.; and to their dismay, when they entered the house, found that the soldiers had cut the shutters, opening the window."²⁶⁹ The Federals even took Hester Bowie's trousseau, "lying in her trunk; the lock of which was cut out by the soldiers, who took away all the contents, even the veil and orange blossoms."²⁷⁰

Natchezians, on the other hand, were more inclined to accept Union occupation. After all, many of them believed it offered an opportunity to preserve their interests, and

²⁶⁷ Eliza Ann Lanier Memoir, "Civil War, The Vicksburg Campaign." 1911. Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

²⁶⁸ Lanier Memoir.

²⁶⁹ Bowie Memoir, 4.

²⁷⁰ Bowie Memoir, 4. See also, Ellen Shields, "Genealogical Memoir of Ellen Shields," 1903, photocopy provided by Katherine Blankenstein of Natchez, now housed in the Natchez Collection, California State University-Northridge, California, used in Joyce L. Broussard, "Occupied Natchez."

it did have its advantages. Occupation, however, was not what they expected. As made clear in Chapter II, Natchezians distrusted federal power, Union or Confederate, and they wanted control of their city, particularly its economy. But they also wanted the North to admit it had been wrong, and they wanted to be part of a national economy within the Union. What Natchezians found, however, was their beloved city run not by locals, but by a convoluted, inefficient army of occupation.²⁷¹ As in Vicksburg, Natchezians saw the Union Army as thieves. Soldiers robbed their homes, and they charged hefty fines against local businesses. Margarette Martin described the destruction of her mansion, Montaigne, which had been completely ransacked by former slaves and Federal soldiers. Even her garden was destroyed.²⁷² Some soldiers went as far as to arrest local citizens who tried to stop them.

Too often for Natchezians, soldiers were acquitted for their crimes against the local populace, especially when they used alcohol to excuse their behavior.²⁷³ These crimes included public intoxication, theft, assault, rape, and murder. Natchezians, in turn, concluded that they had lost control of their city and the ability to care for their families and their community. Even years after the war, when a provisional civilian government regained power, Federal troops could overrule local decisions, particularly in cases involving the military or freedmen.²⁷⁴

²⁷¹ For more on these challenges, see, Smithers, "Profit and Corruption in Civil War Natchez."

²⁷² See, Broussard, "Occupied Natchez."

²⁷³ See, the *Natchez Daily Courier*.

²⁷⁴ See, Smithers, "Profit and Corruption in Civil War Natchez." As Smithers further contends, problems between military and civil officials did not go unnoticed by the Lincoln administration. In 1864, Lincoln signed an order appointing special commissioners to investigate these problems throughout the South. However, the purpose of this chapter is to understand Natchezians' perspective. Significantly, few Mississippians were ever compensated for this loss of property, although Katherine Surget Minor, of Natchez, was awarded some compensation by the US Southern Claims Commission in the 1870s, despite conflicting evidence about her family loyalty during the war. See, Dresser, "Kate and John Minor."

In addition to these issues, both cities had to cope with a dramatic change in the social order. The Emancipation Proclamation, which Lincoln formally issued in January of 1863, *after* Natchez surrendered, re-shaped life in these two Southern cities. For most whites, this change was disastrous. Planters lost their source of labor, as well as their investments in slaves. Significantly, however, slaves had also been a source of honor. Buyers used the purchasing of a slave to prove their manhood, and that purchase offered new opportunities for whites of all classes. By purchasing a slave, men made a statement about themselves and their families, and they could make claims that they were benevolent masters by purchasing slaves for their family members or by purchasing a slave's spouse or child. Slaves gave them the opportunity to realize their fantasies.²⁷⁵ Slavery had been a fundamental part of their lives, both culturally and economically. With its abolition, not only did Southerners have to adjust to a new wage-labor system, but they also had to find new ways of expressing concepts of honor and masculinity.²⁷⁶

To make matters worse, in their eyes, the Union Army not only freed the slaves, but it worked in favor of the freedmen at local whites' expense. Black troops, some of whom were the locals' former slaves, were a constant reminder of this, and the Army gave freedmen a level of authority over their former masters. Added to the whites' frustration, in 1865, Mississippi ratified a new state constitution that included the new "Black Codes" drastically limiting black civil rights. The U.S. Congress, however, ordered the military to block enforcement of these codes, which strengthened black

²⁷⁵ See, Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul: Life inside the Antebellum Slave Market* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

²⁷⁶ This thesis, of course, looks at the perspective of white Natchezians and Vicksburgians, the perspective of slaves, and later freedmen, is no less important. Works that examine this perspective in Natchez include, Behrend, "Rebellious Talk and Conspiratorial Plots;" Kaye, *Joining Places*; Ronald L.F. Davis, *The Black Experience in Natchez, 1720 to 1880* (Denver: Eastern National Press, 1999); and to some extent, Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society*.

political autonomy and limited white power. These actions only heightened tensions between the U.S. military and the civilian populace of Vicksburg and Natchez. In 1868, these problems grew, as Congress replaced Benjamin Humphreys, the state's elected governor, with Adelbert Ames, a northern-born abolitionist, army general, and son-in-law of the despised New Orleans occupier, General Benjamin Butler. Ames pushed for political equality for blacks and appointed two African-American justices of the peace in Natchez, one a former slave. An additional act allowed all male heads of households, including former slaves, to serve as jurors, even in cases involving a white defendant.²⁷⁷

White Mississippians were horrified by these moves toward full and equal rights for freedmen. In 1868, the proposal of a new state constitution disfranchising large numbers of whites, including many who had supported secession, included a provision protecting the political and civil rights of black Mississippians. Although Reconstruction's cessation destroyed much of this early progress towards racial equality, Mississippi witnessed its first black politicians in the wake of these new laws. However, such provisions, as well as black political activism and heightened white-black violence in the cities, only heightened most white Mississippians' bitterness, and the Union Army's protection of those rights re-directed Southern whites' anger towards the soldiers and the North. The *Natchez Democrat* argued that war had "left the North, powerful and prosperous, the South bleeding and desolate . . . the contest of arms is ended, but the war of sectional hate still rages with the intense fury which has ever characterized it . . . Not content with the blood of thousands that have fallen, and that of the innocent victims of the gallows, the unwarranted murders of Military Commissions, they still howl for

²⁷⁷ See, Broussard, "Malvina Matthews."

blood.”²⁷⁸ The irony, of course, was that most Natchezians had not hated the North prior to the war. As the reference to “Military Commissions” hinted, military occupation promoted this new sentiment.²⁷⁹

Not surprisingly, some civilians lashed out. The Ku Klux Klan and public lynchings became increasingly frequent. In Natchez, the Klan made its first appearance in 1868, and lynchings began to be a recurrent sight in Reconstruction-era Vicksburg.²⁸⁰ Thomas Jefferson Downing fled to Texas after murdering one “carpetbagger.” He was angry that his family’s plantation had been destroyed during and after the siege of Vicksburg.²⁸¹ In May 1868, Malvina Matthews, the owner of a highly successful brothel in Natchez, allegedly shot and killed a U.S. soldier, Private John Moffatt. In January of that year, another murder case reached the Circuit Court that Matthews would have remembered. The year before, three Union soldiers met in one of the houses and engaged in an altercation, where one soldier lost his life. This case, and others like it, gave Matthews and other prostitutes reasons to fear intoxicated soldiers. Matthews's acquittal was in part a product of the fact that “significant segments of the white community resented – or outright hated – Union soldiers.”²⁸² By 1876, Mississippi had ratified its

²⁷⁸ Mead, F. J., *Natchez Democrat*, November 30, 1865.

²⁷⁹ For more on how the war and Union occupation disrupted daily life in Natchez, particularly in terms of marriage rates and property values, see, Joyce Broussard, “Coping with the Deluge: The Elite, Not Married Women of Post-bellum Natchez, Mississippi – and the ‘Other Men’ in their Lives,” *Southern Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of the South* 17, no. 1 (2010): 39-74. This situation was not unique. Historians like Joseph S. Tiedemann have noted a similar pattern during the American Revolution. See, Joseph S. Tiedemann, “Patriots by Default: Queens County, New York, and the British Army, 1776-1783,” *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series, 43, no. 1 (1986): 35-63.

²⁸⁰ *Natchez Daily Courier*, April 1868, and *The Vicksburg Daily Herald*, 1867.

²⁸¹ Walt Downing to Jeff Giambrone, email correspondence, June 24, 2002, Henry F. Cook Papers, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS. This connection is based on Walt Downing’s genealogical research, but his connection is clear. There is no reason to believe his research on why his ancestor left Vicksburg is inaccurate.

²⁸² Broussard, “Malvina Matthews.”

first Jim Crow Law, preventing African Americans from riding in railroad coaches with whites. Natchez quickly followed by segregating its river walkways.²⁸³

For white Natchezians, the biggest concern was a government that had stolen their ability to govern themselves and worked against the interests of their community. The *Natchez Democrat* argued that a nation “must hold as sacred its treaties with foreign powers and see that the rights of its subjects are respected AT HOME AND ABROAD.”²⁸⁴ In this light, Southerners were victims of an oppressive Union government, and Jefferson Davis, whom many Natchezians had distrusted during the war, became a symbol of a victimized South. The *Natchez Democrat* further explained, “upon his head has been heaped all the abuse and scurrility of a partisan press and fanatical party. . . this man so treated, so tortured, is the type and representative of the South.”²⁸⁵ Similarly, Robert E. Lee, who some historians argue became a crucial symbol for Confederate nationalism, exemplified Southern masculinity. The *Natchez Democrat* exclaimed that despite his surrender, through “his pure unselfish devotion; his patience; his want of all ambition, except the ambition to do his duty. . . no officer in the Confederate armies was more strongly imbued with an aggressive and pugnacious nature.”²⁸⁶

Part of this “corruption” was the fact that Union troops had lodged a company of black soldiers in the former Forks of the Road slave market, a blatant symbol to white

²⁸³ David M. Oshinsky, “‘Worse than Slavery:’ Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice,” *The Washington Post*. www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/style/longterm/books/chap1/worsethanslavery.htm.

²⁸⁴ “The Executive and Jeff. Davis,” *Natchez Democrat*, October 28, 1865.

²⁸⁵ “The Appeal of the Women of Mississippi,” *Natchez Democrat*, October 21, 1865.

²⁸⁶ “Pen and Ink Sketches,” *Natchez Democrat*, November 28, 1865. See, Gallagher, *The Confederate War*.

Natchezians of the new social order in their city.²⁸⁷ Natchezian soldiers still at war in 1863 likely heard about these changes and feared for the safety of their families. Rather than the return to prosperity as these families had expected, their entire way of life transformed. They regained their ties to the North and the local social institutions that were fundamental to their community, but they lost control of their city. Most importantly, they lost slavery, an intrinsic part of their identity as Southerners and as Natchezians. This loss pushed white Natchezians to embrace Confederate nationalism and notions of Southern superiority in a new way – one that enabled them to construct a memory of the conflict that ignored the Northern qualities of their city and ignored their attempts at neutrality during the war, including their early surrender. This memory was crucial, as it enabled them to shift from one battle, that of Southern independence, to the next, for white “superiority.” Rather than discuss the war, the *Natchez Democrat* wrote, “the people of the South have been brought to the verge of starvation this fall, solely on account of the bad conduct of the negroes . . . owing to the desertion of plantations by the negroes, after they had made arrangements to work, and the inability of the planters to procure other laborers, the crops have been almost entirely lost.”²⁸⁸

Black Codes and, eventually, sharecropping, replaced slavery during Reconstruction and the Jim Crow era, which allowed planters to maintain their interests. The Enticement Act of 1875, for example, prevented employers from luring employed African Americans from other managers – preventing labor costs from increasing. African American Richard Wright described the effects of such laws when he returned to Natchez to visit his father in 1945. The man was “standing alone upon the red clay of a

²⁸⁷ See, Broussard, “Occupied Natchez.”

²⁸⁸ *Natchez Democrat*, October 10, 1865.

Mississippi plantation, a sharecropper, clad in ragged overalls, holding a muddy hoe in his gnarled, veined hands.”²⁸⁹ Other acts increasingly segregated African Americans and whites, with interracial sexual relations becoming one of the most extreme offences. By the mid-nineteenth century, segregation had become a major hindrance to daily life for African Americans. Clifford Boxley explains, “You knew if you went up on Main Street, you had to be going to work, or you had to be coming to one of these stores, you had to be coming to purchase something . . . otherwise, you had no business on Main Street. Now, on Franklin Street, you could hang out.”²⁹⁰

Violence, particularly that directed towards blacks, characterized Mississippi during this period, as it offered whites an outlet for maintaining white supremacy and for enforcing the Black Codes. As one historian explains, Vicksburgians embraced this extralegal method in reaction to former slaves’ successful use of the court system in the late 1860s and 1870s. This distrust of legal methods persisted beyond Reconstruction and into Jim Crow, making lynching and mobbing all too common in Vicksburg well into the twentieth century.²⁹¹ One of the largest enactors of this violence, of course, was the Ku Klux Klan, and some Northern visitors to Mississippi argued that these problems were so severe that at least two or three black men were hanged every day.²⁹² Although they attempted to avoid major changes in their society, particularly the need to compete

²⁸⁹ Richard Wright, *Native Son* (New York: Harper Collins, 1940), quoted in Steven Hoelscher, “Making Place, Making Race: Performances of Whiteness in the Jim Crow South,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 93, no. 3 (2003): 657-686,

²⁹⁰ Clifford Boxley, “Eyewitness to Jim Crow: Clifford Boxley Remembers,” www.forksoftheroads.net/ser_boxley/eyewitness_jimcrow.htm. Extracted from www.JimCrowHistory.org. When Boxley reached adulthood, he changed his name to Ser Seshs Ab Heter in the mid-1960s.

²⁹¹ See, Christopher Waldrep, “Substituting Law for the Lash: Emancipation and Legal Formalism in a Mississippi County Court,” *The Journal of American History* 82, no. 4 (1996): 1425-1451.

²⁹² Oshinsky, “Worse than Slavery.” The standard work on Reconstruction, including the violence of the period, is, Eric Foner, *Reconstruction: America’s Unfinished Revolution, 1863-1877* (New York: Harper Collins, 1989).

for the labor of their former slaves, many elite Natchezians eventually adapted to survive the war and emancipation, and many African Americans remained in subservient roles in the city, despite freedom and a new wage-labor system.²⁹³ In 1865, the *Natchez Democrat* concluded that former slaves had been “brought unprepared into competition with the superior intelligence, tact, and muscle of free white labor, they must surely and speedily perish.”²⁹⁴

Natchezians, in turn, promoted an image of antebellum Southern life that denied pre-war capitalism. Local newspapers, the town’s chapter of the United Confederate Veterans, the Natchez Garden Club, the Ladies Memorial Association, and the Natchez chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy were particularly influential in promoting this myth, leading one historian to argue that no Southern white community embraced the Old South ideals of the Confederacy more than Natchez.²⁹⁵ For example, local women organized a Confederate Pageant in 1941 that depicted an ideal past when a “planter looked after the welfare of his slaves and was loved by them, for they were carefree and happy and sang at their work.”²⁹⁶ Evidence of this was also found in the city’s mansions, which women’s groups like the Natchez Garden Club tirelessly restored – including Dunleith, The Briars, Stanton Hall, The Elms, Glenfield Plantation, Linden,

²⁹³ See, Wayne, *The Reshaping of Plantation Society*. Wayne also contends that capitalism transformed the planters into a ruling class and used it to maintain their interests; however, recent historiography, in particular Scarborough’s *Masters of the Big House*, demonstrates that capitalism was not a new concept in the South. Rather, elite planters had embraced and adapted it, using it during the antebellum period. Nonetheless, Wayne’s work is effective in demonstrating the continuity of specific Southern values, particularly, white racial superiority.

²⁹⁴ *Natchez Democrat*, May 10, 1865.

²⁹⁵ See, Melody Kubassek, “Ask us not to Forget: The Lost Cause in Natchez, Mississippi,” *Southern Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal of the South*, 3, no. 3 (1992): 155-170; Caroline E. Janney, *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies’ Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); and Jack E. Davis, *Race Against Time: Culture and Separation in Natchez Since 1930* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001)

²⁹⁶ Katherine Miller, “The Confederate Tableaux,” 1941, quoted in Hoelscher, “Making Place, Making Race.”

Longwood, Monmouth, Rosalie, and Auburn.²⁹⁷ These magnificent homes pointed to the wealth and success of the city, as well as the genteel, ideal lifestyle Natchezians wanted remembered. Of course, this history ignored the elements that had allowed these homes to be constructed and the reason so many antebellum homes survived the war in Natchez – slavery and the fact that wealthy Unionists dominated the city and surrendered before any fighting took place.

Although in part an opportunity to generate tourism, this memory persisted into the Jim Crow era and into the modern era. Throughout the early 1900s, Natchez was a popular site for white visitors from throughout the nation, but it denied African Americans an opportunity to shape their own definitive memories of the city – a striking fact considering the Forks of the Road Slave Market had thrived up to the outbreak of the Civil War. African Americans even had trouble visiting the city, as Natchez had no African-American run hotels to shelter such tourists. And segregation prevented them from staying in other local hotels.²⁹⁸ As Richard Wright lamented, this was a “white South.”²⁹⁹

Today, of the twenty venues listed on the city’s tourism website, only five of them were built after 1860, and the website promises “a charming city” and the opportunity to “step back in time.”³⁰⁰ Significantly, these are the same promises Natchez made in the 1930s. The *Clarksdale Register*, wrote that a visit to Natchez was an opportunity to relive “hallowed memories” and a “glorious past.”³⁰¹ According to this interpretation,

²⁹⁷ Hoelscher demonstrates the importance of these homes as symbolic sites of the New South and the continuity of the antebellum period. See, Hoelscher, “Making Place, Making Race.”

²⁹⁸ Hoelscher, “Making Place, Making Race.”

²⁹⁹ Wright, *Native Son*, quoted in Hoelscher, “Making Place, Making Race.”

³⁰⁰ Carol Ann Riley, *Visit Natchez: The Official Visitor Guide*, 2012.

³⁰¹ *Clarksdale Register* (1937), 1.

Natchez was the perfect antebellum city and has been able to retain the best aspects of that era.³⁰²

The Civil Rights Movement and the years that followed did force white Natchezians to incorporate the black experience into their memories of antebellum Natchez, replacing the image of happy slaves. Today's Pilgrimage Tours, where local antebellum homes open their doors to visitors, provide a more accurate image of the past.³⁰³ Clifford M. Boxley has pushed that process even further in leading a successful movement to purchase 16,884 square feet of land on the site of the former Forks of the Road Slave Market to commemorate the African American experience.³⁰⁴ However, as both these examples illustrate, even Natchez's tributes to African American history are geared towards the antebellum period. The William Johnson House, as another example, was the home of a free black prior to the Civil War. Additionally, there is still little mention of the cooperation and quick surrender to Union forces that made Natchez's echoes of gentility possible.³⁰⁵

Natchez's Visitor's Guide exemplifies this idealized version of the city when it says, "Open your heart to the true South – embrace Natchez."³⁰⁶ It promises Southern charm and hospitality, where visitors get to experience antebellum history in the traditions and structures of the city.³⁰⁷ Likewise, local bed and breakfasts, typically antebellum mansions, boast Southern hospitality and charm, as well as delicious Southern

³⁰² For a detailed discussion of this historical memory, see Davis, *Race Against Time*. As Davis corroborates, this memory is, in fact, so pervasive that Natchez's early surrender is left unmentioned in many discussions of Civil War and post-Civil War Natchez. Instead, the later date of 1863 is mentioned, as a product of Vicksburg's surrender.

³⁰³ See, Davis, *Race Against Time*.

³⁰⁴ Boxley, "Eyewitness to Jim Crow."

³⁰⁵ L.E.T. Group, *Natchez Pilgrimage Tours*, 2013, www.natchezpilgrimage.com.

³⁰⁶ Riley, *Visit Natchez*.

³⁰⁷ "Tour Natchez," *Natchez: Est. 1716, It's What you Love About the South*, www.visitnatchez.org/things-to-do/tour/.

cuisine and the opulence of the homes. Many of them also discuss initial ownership and construction.³⁰⁸ Another important emphasis is on family life, which, as Chapter II emphasized, was a vital aspect of antebellum Natchez. The Elms' webpage is quick to point out that the home has been in the same family for over 130 years.³⁰⁹ Glenfield Plantation similarly notes that the same family has owned it for the past eight generations and points to a bullet hole in its front door, which "bears witness to a skirmish during the War Between the States, when northern soldiers under the leadership of B.G. Farrar forced their way into the house. On the grounds Capt. Wirt Adams with his Cavalrymen held back the northern soldiers from invading the city of Natchez."³¹⁰ However, significantly, it does not discuss the city's early surrender or why the house survived the war relatively unscathed.

Glenfield Plantation's depiction also emphasizes Natchezians' commitment to an image of the city as one that had always served as a beacon of Confederate nationalism. Rather than a "civil war," which characterized the way most Natchezians would have viewed the war in 1861, the conflict had been a "war between the states," the name used by most promoters of the Lost Cause mythology in the South. In turn, the "bullet hole" reference projects an image of steadfast resistance that did not exist in Natchez. In

³⁰⁸ "Welcome to the Elms: a Gracious Natchez Guest House," *The Elms*, theelms-natchez.com/index.html; "Natchez Bed and Breakfast Glenfield Plantation, *Glenfield Plantation: Bed & Breakfast ~ Weddings ~ Events*, www.glenfieldplantation.com; *Dunleith: Circa 1856 Historic Inn*, www.dunleith.com, "Come as Guests.....Leave as Family;" *Linden: Antebellum Bed & Breakfast*, www.lindenbnb.com; *Magnolia Cottage Bed and Breakfast, Circa 1831*, magnoliacottagebandb.com; *Stanton Hall: Natchez' Premier Attraction is a Destination Wedding Dream Come True!*, www.stantonhall.com; "Welcome to the Briars!" *The Briars: Bed & Breakfast with the Best View from the Mississippi River Bluff!* 2011, www.thebriarsbb.com/index.html; MayerIt, *Brandon Hall Plantation*, www.brandonhallplantation.com; and "Magnolia Hall," *The Natchez Garden Club*, www.natchezgardenclub.com/Magnolia.html.

³⁰⁹ "Welcome to the Elms"

³¹⁰ "Natchez Bed and Breakfast Glenfield Plantation."

reality, this hole may be a product of minimal skirmishing before the surrender or an altercation between Union soldiers and Natchezian civilians during occupation.

There are, however, some aberrations. Stratton Chapel, for example, offers an exhibit of collected Natchez photographs between 1845 and 1910, and some of its recommended historic homes, like Bisland and the Eola Hotel, were built after the war. Monmouth Mansion's website promotes both pre- and post-war history by claiming that "its story is a tale of the Old South and of the New South."³¹¹ Embracing an earlier history as well, the city's site encourages visitors to explore the Grand Village, the site of a prehistoric indigenous village, and Emerald Mound, built by ancestors of the Natchez Indians.³¹² Nonetheless, the bulk of the city's historical focus is on an idealized version of the antebellum period, a product of determined efforts by early twentieth-century Natchezians.³¹³

This idealized memory was a reaction to emancipation and Union occupation during the war and Reconstruction. Not only were Natchezians bitter about the loss of control and of vital aspects of antebellum life, they also saw this emphasis as the best outlet for maintaining white supremacy. But Natchezians were ready to leave the war behind them, as the *Natchez Daily Courier* quipped in September 1863, "surely now is the time for the master minds of the South to endeavor by their burning words and correct counsels to arrest the further progress of a destructive war."³¹⁴ In this mindset, they pointed to happier times with paternalistic master-slave relationships and the idea that the Confederacy would have preserved that "ideal" lifestyle.

³¹¹ Cynthia J. Parker, "Historical Introduction," *Monmouth Historic Inn Circa 1818*, www.monmouthhistoricinn.com.

³¹² "Tour Natchez," *Natchez: Est. 1716, It's What you Love About the South*.

³¹³ Davis, *Race Against Time*.

³¹⁴ *Natchez Daily Courier*, September 15, 1863.

When Natchezians mentioned the war, it was always in reference to their contribution to the war effort or what the Union victory stole from them. Mary Ann Irvine focused on her loss of between eighty and one hundred slaves, leaving her no option but to find employment as a teacher, a decision that would have been unthinkable before the war.³¹⁵ Irvine further explained that her brother, Steele, “distinguished himself in 1862 in the battle of Seven Pines before Richmond – when the standard bearer was killed, Steele immediately grasped the flag and carried it ahead of the whole army.”³¹⁶ She argued that her brothers would have done well in a new country, if the North had just let the South, secede. Occupation led her, and others like her, to embrace Confederate nationalism.³¹⁷

For Natchezians like Mary Ann Irvine, much of this acceptance entailed their promotion of cultural continuity. White superiority and the proper Southern lady had been vital community qualities. Not surprisingly, during occupation, women were particularly important in maintaining these values and in focusing the city’s memory on the antebellum period. Women were able to negotiate new gender roles using “their femininity and sexuality to negotiate acceptable boundaries of conduct and propriety,” which tempered relations between Northerners and Southerners in the city.³¹⁸

The greatest testament to their success may have been the establishment of the Natchez Pilgrimage and creation of memorials like the Civil War Monument that was dedicated in 1890.³¹⁹ Pilgrimage became one of the most overt examples of this newly-constructed memory during Jim Crow; it only served to re-enforce an idealized image of

³¹⁵ Irvine Papers.

³¹⁶ Irvine Papers.

³¹⁷ Shields, “Genealogical Memoir of Ellen Shields.”

³¹⁸ Broussard, “Occupied Natchez,” 206.

³¹⁹ Kubassek, “Ask Us Not to Forget.”

the antebellum period and to ignore the harsh realities of slavery. As one scholar explains, “it served to remind African Americans . . . of their proper, historical place as sharecroppers, while reassuring whites . . . that such a station in life was not only natural but also romantic and even desirable.”³²⁰ Significantly, the 1890 war monument is of a Confederate soldier looking towards the ground – in eternal mourning for a world of the past, perhaps. No comparable Union monument was erected, a fact that emphasizes Natchezians’ embracement of the Lost Cause image and the omission of its war-time sympathy and support for the Union war effort. Ironically, that support for the Union made this glorified image of the past possible.

Women pushed men, including Union soldiers, to behave like gentlemen by embracing an idealized image of Southern ladies. Natchezian women were treated with much more respect than some other Southern women, like those of New Orleans, because of this genteel behavior.³²¹ For example, during the city’s occupation, the head of the Protestant Orphans Home requested supplies for the children, but she was bitter about the Yankee presence in her city. She respectfully refused to enter Rosalie, where General Walter Gresham, the Union commander, was living, as a U.S. flag hung above the door. The General, in turn, respected her resolve and stepped outside to speak with her. The meeting ended with him sending supplies to the orphanage.³²² In this instance, the woman embraced pre-war gender conceptions, encouraged a Union soldier to respond in kind, and maintained a modicum of resistance – despite the need to ask for Federal assistance. Young women even went to dances with Union soldiers and flirted with them

³²⁰ See, Hoelscher, “Making Place, Making Race,” 660.

³²¹ Broussard, “Occupied Natchez.”

³²² See, Matilda Gresham, *Life of Walter Quintin Gresham: 1832-1893*, Vol. 1 (Chicago: Rand-McNally, 1919), 262-263, used in Broussard, “Occupied Natchez.”

just as they had with Southern gentlemen before the war. Sometimes, as in teenager Miss Thornhill's case, this flirtation blossomed into marriage.³²³ Naturally, this behavior helped protect these women, and it offered them opportunities to trade, garner passes, and aid the Confederate war effort.³²⁴ Some of this contribution to the war effort may have been exaggerated in the ladies' memoirs, but it certainly existed. And any exaggeration only emphasized the promotion of this image of Natchez as an idealized antebellum *Southern* city, one that would have resisted the Union whole-heartedly.

Supporting the idea that Natchezian women had been genteel Southern ladies and that this upbringing persisted after the war and into the nineteenth century, white men promoted the notion that they needed to protect these women from vagrant black men.³²⁵ In many ways, the Black Codes were harshest in their references to interracial sex between white women and black men, and Clifford Boxley's experiences demonstrated the implications of this emphasis during the mid-nineteenth century. He recalled, "You don't mess with white women. You don't talk back to white women. You don't sass white women. You don't even find yourself in the presence of white women alone, okay . . . you don't talk about sex. You don't talk about religion. You don't talk about politics."³²⁶

Also emphasizing continuity was the fact that Natchezians protected members of their community, even those less respected. Malvina Matthews' alleged shooting of a

³²³ Gresham, *Life of Walter Quintin Gresham*, Vol. 1.

³²⁴ See Broussard, "Occupied Natchez," 194. Some women, like Kate Foster, of course were much more resistant towards any fraternization with Union soldiers. However, even they treated them with respect and decorum, emblematic of pre-war idealized gender conceptions.

³²⁵ For a detailed look at how white men utilized white femininity see, Glenda Elizabeth Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896-1920* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

³²⁶ Boxley, "Eyewitness to Jim Crow."

Union soldier resulted in a “not guilty” verdict, in part because it was a civilian trial and many of the town’s white residents resented Union soldiers.³²⁷ Additionally, however, Matthews had played a fundamental role in antebellum life. Prostitution was certainly not the most respectable occupation, but Natchezians had tolerated it as an intrinsic part of their community. It served a vital purpose, and Matthews had been highly successful. She was a substantial property holder. White jurors (half of her jurors were freedmen) had a powerful reason to protect her, even if they believed she was guilty. She was a white Southerner, and even more importantly, she was part of their community. Her alleged victim, Private John Moffatt, was not.

In a striking contrast, a former slave woman went to trial for assaulting “a German woman, respectable looking, though evidently poor.”³²⁸ Disgusted by the trial proceedings, however, the *Natchez Democrat* exclaimed that Union Captain Morse had tried the case and treated the former slave with kindness, using a “gentle voice,” while he “gruffly” spoke to the white woman and her Irish witness.³²⁹ He appeared to favor the former slave – in direct opposition to a white Natchezian woman of the community.

Natchezians consistently promoted white superiority. They argued that freedmen were lazy, exemplified by the *Natchez Democrat*’s insistence that “the people of the South have no disposition to deal harshly with their former slaves, but they cannot countenance and support them in the idle habits they have acquired in the last few years.”³³⁰ It also argued that the “differences” between the two races, including the subsequent class structure, were natural, “which gives rise to the division of labor, which

³²⁷ Broussard, “Malvina Matthews,” 57.

³²⁸ “Scene in the Freedman’s Bureau Court,” *Natchez Democrat*, October 26, 1865.

³²⁹ “Scene in the Freedman’s Bureau Court.”

³³⁰ “Negro Vagrants in New Orleans,” *Natchez Democrat*, October 31, 1865.

is essential to the welfare of all well-ordered communities.”³³¹ In that line of thought, racial, gender, and class continuity were essential to community welfare, causing Natchezians to fully embrace Confederate nationalism, claiming “that the Southern man who took no part in the glorious struggle of his section, who felt no interest in its result, and no pride in the noble qualities displayed by his countrymen, would never have shouldered his musket in the Revolution,” which was vital to their freedom as white men and their responsibilities as citizens in the state of Mississippi.³³² The South, formerly the Confederacy, was their country. Service, emancipation, and occupation prompted this belief.

When Vicksburg surrendered, its citizens had expected poor treatment at the hands of the Union Army. Reality was much better than they had anticipated. The army, of course, took control of the city, just as it did later in Natchez. However, for beleaguered citizens who had given the Confederacy everything they could to support its cause – including enduring a forty-seven day siege – occupation became, in some ways, a blessing. Free from the Union Navy’s bombardment, they could return to their homes – even if they had to share their city with Union troops. Most importantly, they had food and water that the Union Army had brought down the river in preparation for the city’s capitulation. Certainly, life in a Union-occupied city had many of the difficulties already discussed, but now Vicksburgians had an opportunity to regain vital components of daily life. As Elizabeth Bowie explained, after the surrender “both whites and negroes were

³³¹ Mead, F. J., *Natchez Democrat*, December 28, 1865.

³³² “The Southern Feeling.” *Natchez Democrat*, November 30, 1865.

excited.”³³³ Many civilians were shocked by how well the Union Army treated them upon its possession of the city.

Vicksburg’s men were ready to take advantage of the city’s capitulation by looking towards the future. In June 1865, W. L. Craig wrote to his brother and sister from California, where he went after the surrender, to let them know that he had settled down. He wrote, “I flatter myself that I have an excellent wife and have been married one year.”³³⁴ After the surrender, Craig left the Confederate Army, abandoned Vicksburg, and journeyed west to move on with his life. John T. Kern’s diary began January 1, 1864, six months after the city’s surrender, but from the beginning he emphasized a new phase of his new life where his new focus was his wife (who remained in the city) and his desire for the war to end. That desire only grew that year. Duty and a sincere desire for a Confederate victory compelled him to continue fighting, but Vicksburg’s collapse shifted his focus and heightened his desire to return to his wife. In one of his final entries in the fall of 1864, Kern exclaimed, “oh! What would I not give to be with you. If this war would only end I’d hasten to you now ---- it will not end, I am like you though & think it can’t last always.”³³⁵ Vicksburg’s battle was over.

Vicksburgians occasionally found and took advantage of outlets within this system to air their grievances.³³⁶ Eliza Ann Lanier served as an example of this surprise when she wrote, “the officers were very kind. Gen. Grant never refused me a favor and

³³³ Bowie Memoir.

³³⁴ W. L. Craig to his brother and sister, June 2, 1865, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

³³⁵ John T. Kern Diary, August 19, 1864, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 11. For a similar sentiment, see Edwin Herring letters to his wife, 1863-1864, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

³³⁶ Union occupation certainly encompassed a host of difficulties for Vicksburg civilians, some of which were even worse than those they experienced during the siege. I do not seek to downplay those grievances here. However, I argue that those problems were less than what many locals had anticipated. For a discussion of the problems accompanying life in occupied Vicksburg, see, Cotton and Giambrone. *Vicksburg and the War*.

Gen. McPherson was very kind.”³³⁷ She marveled at the fact that they returned her family its horses and other supplies, despite soldiers’ attempts to steal them. Some of the soldiers were even honorable to Lanier, as she described two men who “made good citizens . . . married two nice ladies who were daughters of old residents.”³³⁸

This relief and desire to return to daily life did not mean that Vicksburgians no longer supported the Confederacy. John T. Kern, Edwin Herring, and other soldiers remained with the Confederate Army for this reason. Kern wrote to his mother despairing that she was “having to submit to so much from the hated enemy . . . ‘I am fighting for our ven-geance,’ we have good cause to fight for it.”³³⁹ He and others were angry about Vicksburg’s surrender and Union occupation, even though they were also relieved about some of the fair treatment they had received at the hands of Union officers and some soldiers. As he concluded his letter, however, Kern and others like him revealed their continued confidence in Southern victory.

Many civilians in the city felt the same way and refused to take the oath of allegiance, limiting their mobility and the supplies they could obtain from the army. They welcomed the peace and stability that occupation brought after the long siege, but they remained determined Confederates. Like their counterparts in Natchez, Emma Cline and other Vicksburgian women hid contraband under their skirts to continue supporting the Confederacy.³⁴⁰ Josephine Erwin even smuggled a Confederate company’s flag out of the city, preventing its surrender.³⁴¹ Some men chose to enlist after the city

³³⁷ Lanier Memoir.

³³⁸ Lanier Memoir.

³³⁹ John T. Kern to his mother, April 2, 1864, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

³⁴⁰ Lanier Memoir. See also, Cotton and Giambrone, *Vicksburg and the War*.

³⁴¹ The flag belonged to the 6th Missouri. Erwin smuggled it out of the city when she left for Lexington, Kentucky in July 1863. See, Cotton and Giambrone. *Vicksburg and the War*.

surrendered, including Eliza Ann Lanier's brother-in-law, ---- Herring, and D.C.M. Higham.³⁴²

Other Vicksburgians began reviewing and clarifying the South's right to secede, a trend that continued throughout Reconstruction and Vicksburg's calls for reconciliation. William Burr Howell pointed to the nation's history of secession threats. He emphasized a man's allegiance to his state as paramount to that owed to the general government. He explained that in response to the acquisition of the Louisiana territory, the representatives of Massachusetts had "uttered the following significant language. 'if this bill passes . . . as it will be the right of all, so it will be the duty of some, definitely to prepare for a separation, amicably if they can, violently if they must.'"³⁴³ Howell emphasized the sentiment of both Vicksburgians and Natchezians. Because Northerners had also threatened secession, the South had a right to secede in 1860.

Ironically, the combined experiences of the siege, Union occupation, and some neighbors' "betrayal" cemented a community that had scarcely existed in 1860. Unlike Natchez, whose community was ravaged by war and the loss of control after the surrender, Vicksburg's civilians found common ground and created a community in the midst of that struggle.³⁴⁴ Benjamin Bounds, for example, returned to Vicksburg in 1865. He had lost his brother and both parents, leaving only his sister and her husband at home, so he left for Texas. Eventually, however, he "got lonesome for Mississippi and came

³⁴² Lanier Memoir, Edwin Herring to his brother, December 1, 1863, and D. C. M. Higham, *Personal Reminiscences of the Civil War*, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

³⁴³ William Burr Howell Papers, "The Allegiance to as State," Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 1.

³⁴⁴ This process of community formation mirrors that recorded by G. Ward Hubbs in *Guarding Greensboro* for Greensboro, Alabama. Rather than a single company, in Greensboro's case, the Greensboro Guards, Vicksburgians found common ground in their shared experiences as active participants in the war. Greensboro's residents experiences in the war were no less important in this process, just not to the same degree.

back,” and he settled in Claiborne County near Vicksburg by marrying Ellen Virginia Goza in 1869.³⁴⁵ He had fought for Mississippi and Vicksburg, and despite all they had lost, he still viewed it as his home.

Vicksburgians were proud of their contribution, and they felt they had given the Confederacy everything they could to fight for independence. Emphasizing this pride, rather than focusing on Vicksburg’s defeat, these men and women pointed to the *community’s* bravery. The superintendent of the city, in cooperation with the Warren County Board of Police, developed a list of wounded and disabled soldiers and their families, including a list of the widows of soldiers who died during the war.³⁴⁶ This list honored these men and their families for supporting the Confederacy. On a more practical level, it provided the police force with a list of families who would need communal support. In his “History of the ‘Warren Rifles,’” Captain Nathaniel H. Harris spoke of the company’s “gallant” officers and the soldiers’ “courage, self sacrifice, and devotion,” concluding that “the long death roll, could it be produced, would demonstrate that they were worthy comrades of those who marched and fought and died with the ever glorious Army of Northern Virginia.”³⁴⁷ When the Volunteer Southrons reformed in 1875, the first brief entry exemplified the veterans’ pride in their service to the Confederacy and their resistance to Reconstruction. It stated, “Here we are again – ‘Always Ready.’”³⁴⁸

³⁴⁵ Benjamin H. Bounds Memoir. Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

³⁴⁶ *Superintendent’s Minute Book 1853-1867*, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

³⁴⁷ Nathaniel H. Harris to Captain D. A. Campbell, September 6, 1895, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS.

³⁴⁸ *Minute Book of the Volunteer Southrons 1853 & 1875*, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS 36.

In addition to bolstering community solidarity, honoring Vicksburg's contribution to the Confederacy served another vital purpose: it allowed Vicksburgians to shift their attention from the war to the next battles for the post-war South. For them, these were contests over historical memory, regaining their place in the national economy, and white supremacy. The first step in this process was to promote reconciliation, and as other historians have noted, one of the biggest ways supporters of reconciliation promoted this ideal was to emphasize the bravery of all soldiers, both North and South. They *all* fought for a cause.

Although he was from Okolona, in northeastern Mississippi, Mississippi Senator James Gordon's farewell speech on February 21, 1910 exemplified this sentiment when he said, "I do not want to stir up strife between the old soldiers or citizens . . . We thought we ought to fight for our States, and we disagreed just on a little section in the Constitution – a very small thing to fight about, but we made an awful big fuss when we got at it."³⁴⁹ Gordon argued that no one had been wrong, and both sides had fought bravely. He further pointed to George Washington by saying that many men called him a traitor, but few Americans would now.³⁵⁰ Ultimately, then, Gordon was countering many of the arguments against reconciliation by emphasizing the similarities between the two sections.

Significantly, Gordon concluded his speech by referencing capitalism, directly linking his hope for reconciliation to Mississippi's desires to reassert itself within the national economy, a connection that was paramount to both Vicksburg and Natchez. He

³⁴⁹ Hon. James Gordon of Mississippi, "Farewell Speech on His Retirement from the Senate." February 21, 1910. Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 8.

³⁵⁰ Hon. James Gordon of Mississippi, "Farewell Speech," 9.

wrote, “I want your capitalists to come down to Mississippi, and we will give them the right hand of fellowship.”³⁵¹ Of course, Gordon made his request in 1910, long after the war had ended. Vicksburgians, however, had been linking questions surrounding reconciliation to capitalism since the South’s surrender. Following a visit to former Confederate hospitals throughout the South in the fall of 1865, C.K. Marshall of Vicksburg gave a speech at Cooper Institute in New York City requesting aid by emphasizing reconciliation. Referencing the Confederate Army, he said, “Never was an army more thoroughly imbued with the idea that their cause was just – that it was the cause of religion, civilization, self-protection and essential to the preservation of the Republican principles as elucidated by the Fathers of the Country for the North as well as for the South.”³⁵² Only four years after completing his service in the Confederate Army, J.J. Cowan had regained his economic connections in the North and wrote to his wife from an unnamed Northern city to let her know that he would be making his way to Providence, Rhode Island, Boston, Massachusetts, and St. Louis, Missouri before returning home to her.³⁵³ He never mentioned the war, and his letter demonstrated the range of connections reopened to Vicksburgians through reconciliation.

Not all calls for reconciliation referenced money or capitalism. In 1869, Samuel G. French asked Americans to respect the memory of the men on either side for defending their country. He stated, “I pass over the war and the events that produced it with the single remark that if the Confederate dead gave their *lives* for home and country,

³⁵¹ Hon. James Gordon of Mississippi, “Farewell Speech,” 10.

³⁵² Quoted in J.B. Cain, “Methodism in the Mississippi Conference 1846-1870,” Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 396-397.

³⁵³ J.J. Cowan to his wife. August 20, 1865, Henry F. Cook Papers, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS, 2.

then there must have been some great principle involved in the issue.”³⁵⁴ His only focus was on honoring the many men who died for the South, but his attention also highlights the second battle Vicksburgians waged after the South surrendered – the contest over historical memory.

As historians Gordon A. Cotton and Jeff T. Giambrone observe, “Vicksburg. Civil War. Mention one and most people think of the other.”³⁵⁵ Unlike Natchez, Vicksburgians did not emphasize the antebellum period. Rather, they highlighted the city’s contribution to the war effort, a fact that is not surprising since that contribution united the city’s residents in a way that had not existed before the war. Emphasizing the bravery of Vicksburg’s civilians and soldiers was vital to this story. The legend of Captain Whitaker and his scouts serves as a colorful example of this emphasis. Dr. Issac R. Whitaker organized a guerrilla company of Confederate soldiers after Vicksburg surrendered. As historians Cheryl Sims and Gordon Cotton explain, “In the minds of many old residents of the southern end of Warren and the eastern tip of Claiborne counties, Whitaker’s Scouts never met their match.”³⁵⁶ These stories were certainly exaggerated and glorified the successes of Whitaker’s Scouts, but they demonstrate this contest for historical memory, as well as a bitterness towards the Union Army after the city seceded. Whitaker and stories about him served to undermine that authority, and he held out for almost two years after the city’s surrender, May 4, 1865. Locals took great

³⁵⁴ Samuel G. French Speech, 1869. French Papers, Mississippi Department of Archives and History, Jackson, MS, 1.

³⁵⁵ Cotton and Giambrone, *Vicksburg and the War*.

³⁵⁶ Cheryl Sims and Gordon Cotton, “Whitaker’s Scouts: The Story of a Confederate Company that Wouldn’t Give Up.” *Vicksburg Sunday Post*, August 2, 1970. See also, Cotton and Giambrone, *Vicksburg and the War*.

pride in his stubbornness and in a reward issued by Union authorities for Whitaker's capture – "\$1000 dead or alive."³⁵⁷

This memory of the war was so pervasive, it persisted into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. To commemorate the centennial anniversary of the surrender, *The Vicksburg Evening Post* published a series of articles in the summer of 1963 entitled, "With Rebel Army – Civil War Diary of Vicksburger." Upon the series' completion, the newspaper published the entire diary of George Albert Grammer, a young Vicksburgian who joined the Confederate Army in 1861; it glorified Vicksburg's contribution to the South.³⁵⁸ Many street names in the city still commemorate its wartime past, including Confederate Avenue, Pemberton Avenue, Sherman Avenue, Union Avenue, Indiana Avenue, and Wisconsin Avenue. In contrast, Natchez's older street names commemorate its Native American, French, and antebellum pasts, with names like, Homochito Street, Devereaux Drive, and St. Catherine Street. Vicksburg's annual Run Thru History, which began in 1980, puts participants on a journey through the Vicksburg National Military Park. In part, of course, that focus is an effort to grant active walkers, joggers, and runners an opportunity to compete in some of the city's most difficult hills, but it also highlights the city's wartime past.

In 1997, The Junior Auxiliary of Vicksburg published a cookbook entitled, *Ambrosia*, that highlighted antebellum homes in the city as well as southern recipes, like fried chicken, black-eyed pea cornbread, peach ice cream, Vicksburg Tomato Sandwiches, cheese straws, turnip green soup, and, of course, ambrosia. The book never

³⁵⁷ Sims and Cotton, "Whitaker's Scouts."

³⁵⁸ See, "With Rebel Army – Civil War Diary of Vicksburger," *Vicksburg Evening Post*, June 9, 1963-June 21, 1963.

overtly discusses the Civil War or the surrender of Vicksburg, but it does highlight the elements of Vicksburg they believe set it apart. Brenda Ware Jones writes, “All Saints’ Episcopal School, nestled in a bend of beautiful, verdant Confederate Avenue in Vicksburg, is proud of its location in an old, old town, the *identity of which lies in its association with battle*.”³⁵⁹ The book also emphasizes the city’s experiences during the war, including the shells visitors can still see in many of the city’s antebellum mansions. It also commemorates the homes’ service to the war effort, a direct contrast to the emphasis placed on antebellum homes in Natchez, which highlight the mansions’ pre-war idealizations. Duff Green Mansion of Vicksburg, for example, catered to wounded Confederate soldiers during the siege, and at one point, the mistress of the home hid in a cave with her family and “perhaps thrown into labor by the noise and horror all around her, gave birth to a son in that cave.” She named him Siege.³⁶⁰ The home also contributed valuable iron to the Confederate war effort, costing it its iron balconies. *Ambrosia* also emphasizes the civilians’ struggle and bitterness during Reconstruction, but significantly, that focus is on Northern “carpetbaggers” rather than Union troops.

Beyond wartime Vicksburg, the recipe books highlights the other major elements emphasized in historical memory of the city – the river, which granted it its pre and post-war cosmopolitan nature, and its growth *after* the war. This focus, once again, is not surprising. Until the war, Vicksburg had only a very small stable community. Few families were well-established. As the book explains, “More people and more commerce came in the years after the war.”³⁶¹ Not surprisingly, downtown Vicksburg highlights

³⁵⁹ Brenda Ware Jones, *Ambrosia: A Deep South Mixture of Homes Recipes & History* (Vicksburg, Mississippi: The Junior Auxiliary of Vicksburg, Mississippi, 1997) 12. Emphasis Mine.

³⁶⁰ Jones, *Ambrosia*, 18.

³⁶¹ Martha Hickman Day, *Ambrosia*, 56.

this maritime past, including a riverfront mural of images highlighting its antebellum, wartime, and twentieth-century pasts, and ultimately, the recipe book itself is a testament to this diversity – a stark contrast to Natchez’s focus on the antebellum period.

While *Ambrosia* highlights eleven structures built before the war (most of which were built in the mid- to late 1850s), the other fourteen structures were built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – including a more stable firehouse – emphasizing the growth of a stable community following the Civil War.³⁶² This lack of antebellum homes is also a testament to the fact that many of the city’s early homes were demolished to make room for the railroad and the city’s growing business sector after the war. One of the greatest testaments to this growth is the book’s early assertion – “Vicksburg is a Deep South mixture. Italian, English, Lebanese, African, and Irish.”³⁶³ Another recipe book, *Moore Groceries*, provides a similar assertion: “this city on the Mississippi River is overflowing with recipes from almost every culture in the world.”³⁶⁴ Like *Ambrosia*, this recipe book emphasizes this diverse past, but its focus is the city’s booming post-Civil War era, including commemorative events for the war, as it utilizes photos from the J. Mack Moore Collection in the Old Court House Museum.³⁶⁵

Websites advertising Vicksburg also highlight this cosmopolitan past, boasting that “few cities can claim the number of captivating contributions to U.S. history.”³⁶⁶ The “Visit Vicksburg” website points to the city’s wartime past, maritime past, century-

³⁶² *Ambrosia*.

³⁶³ *Ambrosia*, 3.

³⁶⁴ The Old Court House Museum, *Moore Groceries*, (Vicksburg, Mississippi: the Vicksburg & Warren County Historical Society, 2008) 11.

³⁶⁵ *Moore Groceries*. Born in 1869, Moore took photographs throughout Vicksburg until his death in 1954.

³⁶⁶ “Explore,” *Vicksburg Mississippi: The Key to the South*, <http://www.visitvicksburg.com/explore/>. In examining these websites, I chose not to include the Vicksburg National Military Park or the USS Cairo Museums, as they are federally owned and operated and do not serve as direct testaments to the city’s construction of historical memory.

old churches, train depots, the river, the Mississippi Blues Trail, and riverboat casinos, as well as its antebellum homes. The Biedenharn Coca-Cola Museum, for example, highlights the city's commercialism, and the Old Levee Depot Museum points to the city's engineering past by emphasizing ship models and transportation plans throughout the city's history. This broad range of contributions allows the city to advertise "an authentic Southern experience you don't want to miss."³⁶⁷ Even the Old Court House Museum, which primarily focuses on the structure's wartime past, points to the city's early twentieth-century experiences.³⁶⁸

Many of the websites on the homes and museums of Vicksburg boast views of the Mississippi river and/or the city's Civil War past.³⁶⁹ The website dedicated to the antebellum home, Anchuca, for example, points to its previous owner Joseph Emory Davis, Jefferson Davis' brother. As it explains, "the town's legend testifies that it was during this stay [in January 1869] that Jefferson Davis did indeed speak to friends and neighbors from Anchuca's front balcony, marking this site for many historians and Southerners alike as one of the last public addresses to the people of Vicksburg by Jefferson Davis."³⁷⁰ The websites also support the main Vicksburg website in emphasizing its rich history. The words, "150 Years of History," are the first words

³⁶⁷ "Welcome to Vicksburg, Mississippi," *Vicksburg, Mississippi: The Key to the South*, www.visitvicksburg.com.

³⁶⁸ Land Tech Web Designs, Corp, *Vicksburg's Old Court House Museum*, <http://oldcourthouse.org/>.

³⁶⁹ See, L.E.T. Group, Inc., *Cedar Grove Mansion Inn & Restaurant*, <http://www.cedargroveinn.com/>; *Anchuca: Historic Mansion and Inn*, <http://www.anchuca.com/history.html>; *Annabelle: Bed & Breakfast Inn, Excellence in Innkeeping since 1992*, <http://www.annabellebnb.com/>; *The Corner's Mansion: A Bed & Breakfast & Tour Home*, <http://www.thecorners.com/>; Michael Logue, "A Legacy of Luxury and History," *The Duff Green Mansion*, <http://www.duffgreenmansion.com/>; Fueloncorp Design, *Lower Mississippi River Museum & Riverfront Interpretative Museum*, <http://www.lmrn.org/>; *The McNutt House Suites & Tour Home Circa 1826, 1832*, <http://themcnutthouse.com/>; and *Vicksburg's Old Court House Museum*.

³⁷⁰ *Anchuca: Historic Mansions and Inn*.

visitors see when they visit the link for the Bazinsky House, and the site for the Yesterday's Children Museum boasts, "Two Centuries of Wonder seen through a Child's eyes!"³⁷¹

As Jack E. Davis and others have noted, this battle for historical memory after the Civil War included one major component – race.³⁷² The war and slavery were over in the South, and Vicksburg, like Natchez, had to cope with the burgeoning population of former slaves within the city. Not surprisingly, like their Natchezian counterparts, their reaction was to promote white racial solidarity, a fact they promoted in historical memory by simply ignoring African American history. Even Vicksburg's prominent African Americans, like Jere Blowe, a saloonkeeper and owner of a local retail liquor store, struggled to develop a memory powerful enough to counter this version in the early 1900s. Of course, even the most successful black citizens of Vicksburg struggled to have any influence on Mississippi politics, let alone historical memory, during Jim Crow.³⁷³ Efforts to preserve the Old Court House and homes like that of legendary Civil War diarist Martha Ballard began in the mid-nineteenth century and were highly successful, but they de-emphasized the city's history of racial violence and segregation.³⁷⁴

Additionally, few early accounts even mention free blacks or slaves during the war, and current tourist attractions have only begun highlighting this past within the last twenty years. The Jacqueline House Museum in Vicksburg opened in 1995 and serves as

³⁷¹ See, "150 Years of History," *Bazinsky House*, http://www.bazinskyhouse.com/Home_Page.html; and Michael Logue, "Two Centuries of Wonder Seen Through a Child's Eyes!" *Yesterday's Children: An Antique Doll & Toy Museum*, <http://www.yesterdayschildrenmuseum.com/>.

³⁷² Davis, *Race Against Time*.

³⁷³ "Jere Blowe: A Black Whiskey Man in a 'Jim Crow' Era," *Those Pre-Pro Whiskey Men!* April 6, 2013. pre-prowhiskeymen.blogspot.com/2013/04/jere-blowe-black-whiskey-man-in-jim.html.

³⁷⁴ Vicksburg's "Tapestry" program did not begin until the late nineteenth century – long after Natchez's Pilgrimage began, and it does not have the same transformative history or influence on the city.

the only African-American museum in the city, but its growing collection includes over 20,000 items.³⁷⁵ The youth of this museum is striking, considered Vicksburg was home to one of the largest African American communities in the state during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. The city's website also advertises the Beulah Cemetery, home to over 5,500 prominent African American graves.³⁷⁶

Promotion of white racial superiority began as soon as Vicksburg surrendered. When her family was robbed under Union occupation, rather than blame the soldiers, Eliza Ann Lanier exclaimed, "The negroes raided us. They fired a gun – I suppose as a signal to meet."³⁷⁷ In 1874, a group of white Vicksburgians lynched several carpetbaggers and African Americans during a riot. Union troops forced many of the participants to flee the city, but their message was clear. Of all the frustrations accompanying the city's capitulation, "traitors" and emancipated slaves were their foes, not Union troops.³⁷⁸ As historian Christopher Waldrep explains, "At the end of the nineteenth century, whites [of Vicksburg] shared a common identity, one that crossed gender lines. It was this shared identity that allowed Warren County to deal in extra-legal violence: the mob rode again: lynchers haunted the landscape."³⁷⁹ By the turn of the century, Vicksburgians, like Mississippians in general, were committed to white supremacy, a sentiment Senator James Gordon expressed when he said, "I want to see you join me in taking away the bayonets that are on those guns you sent down there to a

³⁷⁵ Weebly, *The Jacqueline House Museum*, <http://jacquelinehouse.weebly.com/index.html>.

³⁷⁶ "African American," *Vicksburg, Mississippi: The Key to the South*, http://www.visitvicksburg.com/explore/african_american.

³⁷⁷ Lanier Memoir, 5.

³⁷⁸ John R. Jay to Gordon Cotton and Jeff Giambrone, September 14, 2004, Henry F. Cook Papers, Old Court House Museum, Vicksburg, MS.

³⁷⁹ Waldrep, "Women, the Civil War, and Legal Culture." As Waldrep explains, lacking community solidarity, this extra-legal violence was not effective in Vicksburg in the early-nineteenth century.

race of people who came out of a jungle and are only partially civilized. We can not civilize them in half a century.”³⁸⁰

Ultimately, like most regions in the South, this promotion of white supremacy characterized Vicksburg and Natchez during Reconstruction and the early-nineteenth century. Historical memory was a vital component of this battle, and women played important roles in emphasizing specific elements of the past.³⁸¹ For Natchezians who had maintained a steadfast commitment to the welfare of the city, Union occupation prompted a depiction of Natchez as the quintessential example of the Old South – including a whole-hearted commitment to the Confederate war-effort. In reality, that commitment had only existed when it best fit the interests of the community. Despite their expectations, Union occupation wrested away Natchezians’ control of their own city, prompting them to embrace Confederate nationalism and to re-write their own history.

In contrast, Vicksburgians, who by 1860 had not developed a stable community like Natchez, were committed to their one stable connection – the South. When they finally surrendered, they were proud of the sacrifices they had made for the Confederacy and were committed to resisting the Union Army within the confines of the city. This shared sacrifice and commitment to Confederate nationalism cemented communal ties that had not existed before the war, and Vicksburgians chose to focus on both this period and the early-twentieth century in historical memory of their city. This focus allowed them to begin promoting reconciliation much earlier than their Natchezian counterparts, and it aided them in reasserting themselves within the national economy.

³⁸⁰ Hon. James Gordon of Mississippi, “Farewell Speech, 9.”

³⁸¹ For the importance of women in this process, see Davis, *Race Against Time*; Broussard, “Occupied Natchez;” Broussard, “Occupied Women;” Cotton and Giambrone, *Vicksburg and the War*; and Waldrep, “Women, the Civil War, and Legal Culture.”

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION: CONFEDERATE NATIONALISTS

Today, Vicksburg is synonymous with ardent Confederate resistance, while Natchez remains synonymous with the wealth of the antebellum South, and these two narratives fit the cities' pre- and wartime experiences. Vicksburg paid a tremendous price for its resistance – including a forty-seven day siege and the destruction of many of its antebellum homes, including one of the most unique homes in the area, “The Castle,” which had been designed as a replica of a medieval castle.³⁸² Natchez, in contrast, survived the war relatively unscathed. True, like Vicksburg, it endured Union occupation and the difficulties inherent during that period, and its white civilians had to cope with emancipation and a new labor system. But the city itself had very little property damage – a direct product of its early surrender – allowing the main website advertising the city to rightly boast, “Natchez is fortunate to have the greatest number of historic structures that remained untouched during the plight of the South.”³⁸³ Over twenty-seven antebellum homes still stand in Natchez, and they remain a testament to the prosperity of pre-war Natchez. Vicksburg's antebellum homes, in contrast, stand as witnesses to steadfast resistance to the Union army, and these two powerful narratives have left a lasting resentment in Vicksburg towards its counterpart to the south.

This thesis has examined the creation of those two prevailing memories, and both Vicksburgians and Natchezians continue to wrestle with them to this day. How could

³⁸² Ironically, the home had belonged to Armistead Burwell, an outspoken Unionist and outcast in Vicksburg during the 1860s. Union troops destroyed it to make use of its moat and property by stationing an artillery battery on the site. Vicksburg Old Court House Museum, “A Photographic tour of Civil War Vicksburg.” Oldcourthouse.org/photos/civil-war-tour/

³⁸³ “Historic Homes of Natchez.” *Natchez: It's What You Love About the South*. www.visitnatchez.org/things-to-do/tour-historic-homes/

Natchez, a city fully immersed in a national and even Atlantic World economy before the war, fail to resist the Union advance in 1862 *and* maintain an image depicting it as a quintessential example of the antebellum South? How could Vicksburgians cope with first Vicksburg's collapse and second the Confederacy's collapse after sacrificing so much for the war effort? By conducting a dual community study, this thesis has been able to address these issues, and it has contributed to historians' understanding of Confederate nationalism, civilian and soldiers' motivations, and memory, both during and after the American Civil War.

Ultimately, pre-war characteristics shaped Vicksburg and Natchez's reactions and experiences during the war and after, and while Vicksburg civilians quickly developed feelings of Confederate nationalism and whole-heartedly resisted the Union war effort, their Natchez counterparts maintained a commitment to their city and their national trade networks. On the surface, these two cities had appeared markedly similar in the 1850s. They were the two largest cities in Mississippi, and both of them relied on the Mississippi River and vital economic and social ties to the North and to New Orleans. These elements set Vicksburg and Natchez apart by pushing them to oppose secession, unlike most of the state. Secession forced them to choose between regional loyalties and the future prosperity of their cities.

At first, civilians in both cities supported the Confederacy once secession was official, and that support fit their expectations of the war. Both groups believed the South had a right to secede and hoped the North would allow it to leave peacefully, but if it resisted, they generally expected the war to be over quickly and the South to be successful, a sentiment they shared with their counterparts throughout the South. If the Confederacy had been successful, Natchezian and Vicksburgian support would have been

the best outlet for maintaining their economic interests. However, that allegiance was tenuous in Natchez.

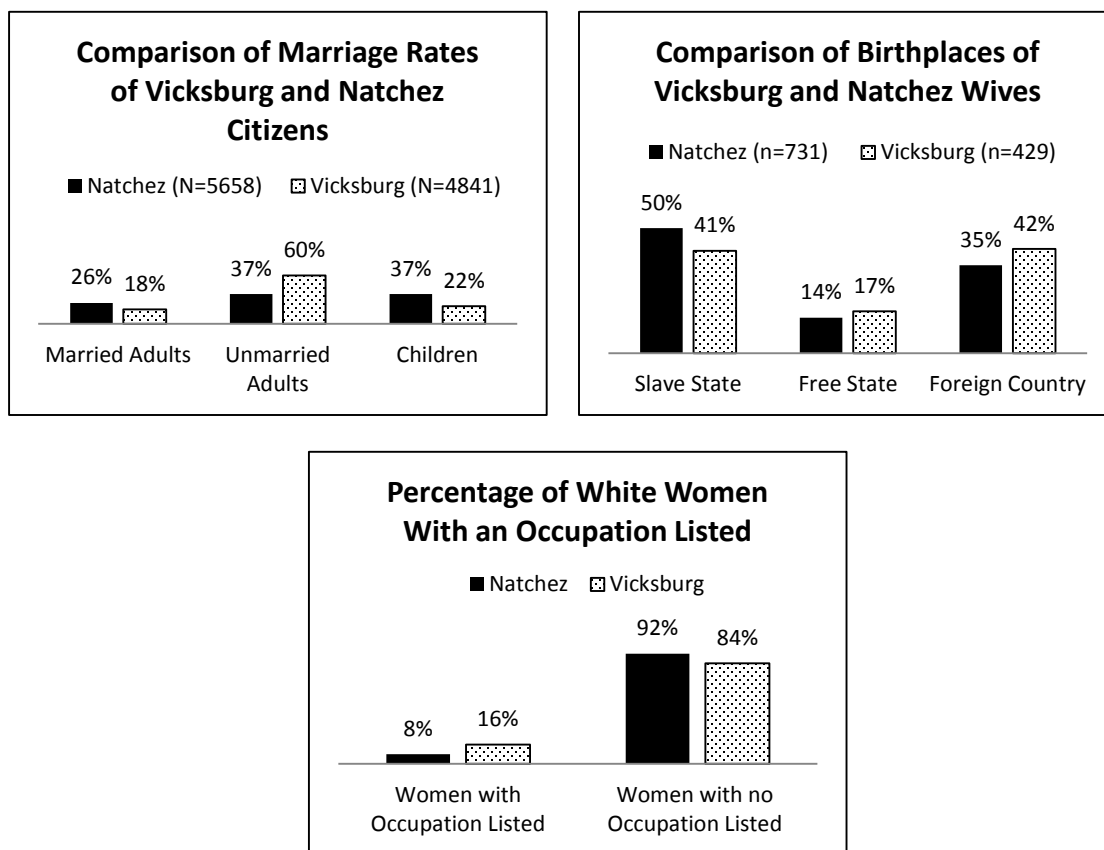
As a younger city, Vicksburg had been home to a large population of newcomers to Mississippi who were able to shift their loyalty to a new nation more quickly than their counterparts in Natchez, and these Vicksburgians were remarkably quick to view the newly formed Confederate States of America as their nation – a nation whose welfare was even more important than the good of the state or even Vicksburg itself. By late 1860, then, Vicksburg embodied the idea of Confederate nationalism, and Vicksburgians resisted the Union army throughout the war.

In contrast by 1860, Natchez had been home to an established community of locals who placed the good of the community and its future prosperity above the good of the Confederacy. They were committed to local control and economic prosperity, as well as slavery and other elements defining the antebellum South. Thus, when Union troops approached the city, forcing the good of the Confederacy into conflict with the good of Natchez, locals chose the city and surrendered. At least in Natchez, Confederate nationalism was limited.

Only after the war, and particularly its experiences during Union occupation, did Natchez fully embrace Southern nationalism, joining Vicksburg in promoting the quickly emerging myth of the Lost Cause. Natchezians chose to emphasize the antebellum era and suppressed elements from its past that denied this idealized image of the South, including the African American experience, its pre-war capitalistic nature, and its early surrender. Vicksburgians, in contrast, focused on their steadfast resistance to the Union army and forged a community that had not existed prior to the war. Both memories portrayed Vicksburg and Natchez as archetypal models of Confederate nationalism.

APPENDIX A

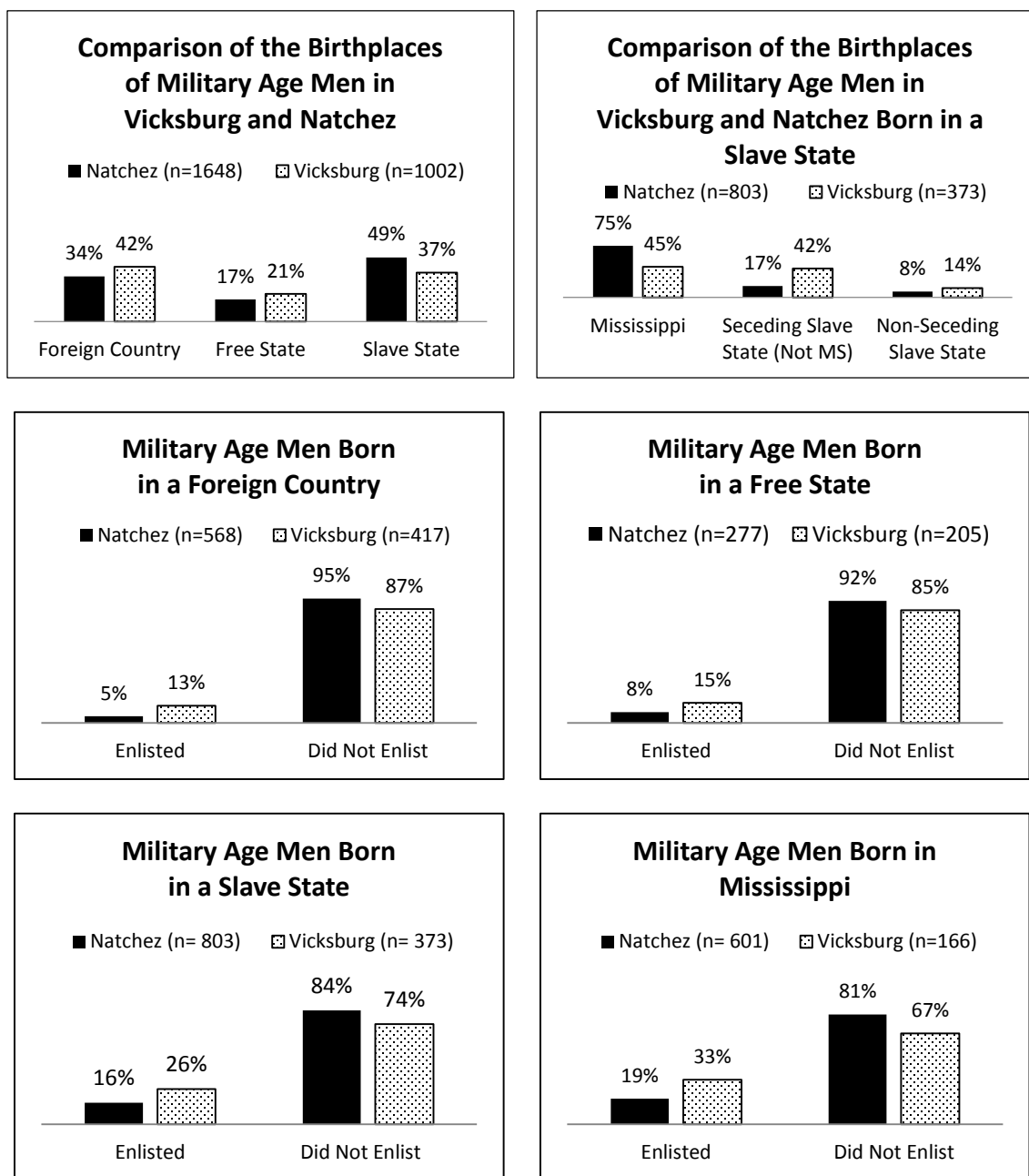
COMPARISON OF MARRIAGE RATES AND THE WHITE WOMEN OF
VICKSBURG AND NATCHEZ³⁸⁴



³⁸⁴ The following Figures are based on data compiled from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1860.

APPENDIX B

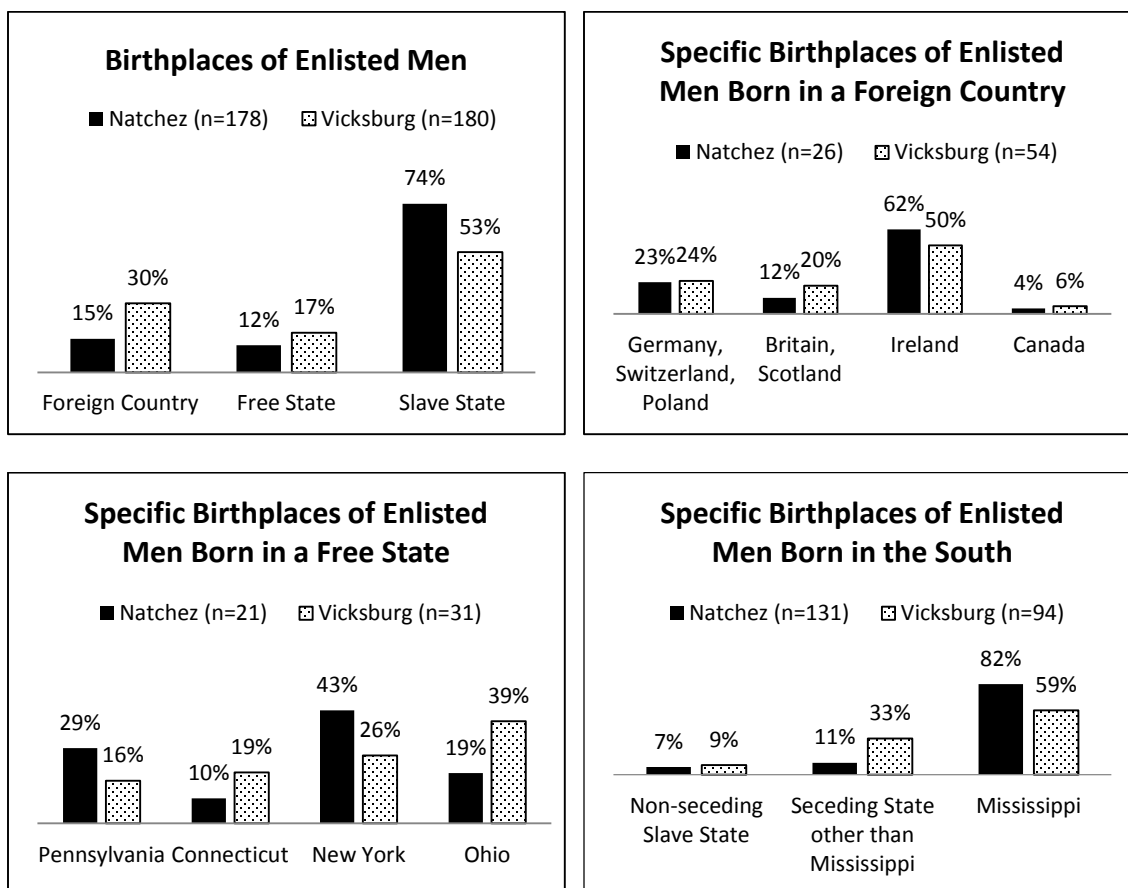
COMPARISON OF VICKSBURG AND NATCHEZ MILITARY AGE MEN



APPENDIX C

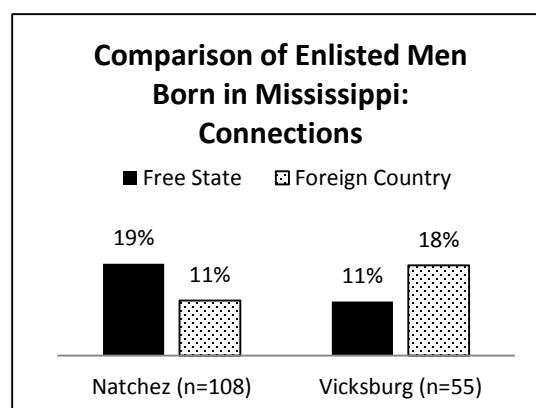
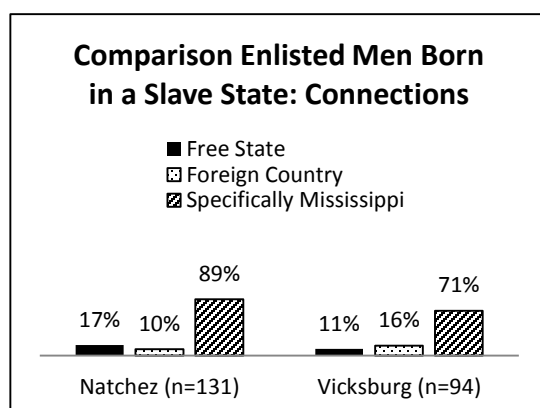
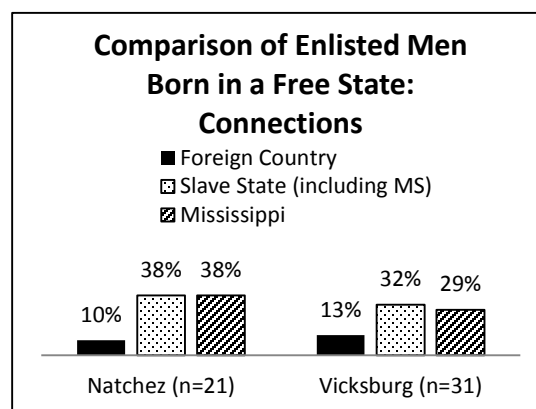
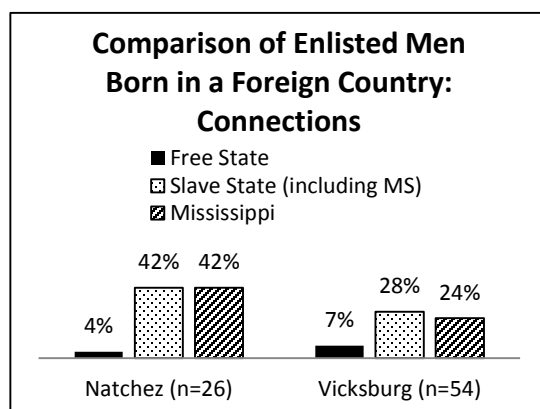
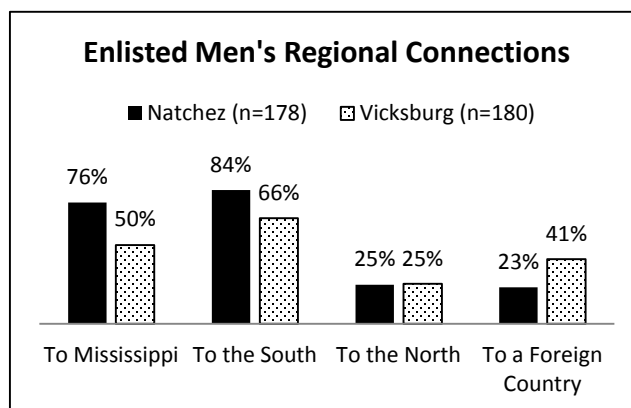
COMPARISON OF THE BIRTHPLACES OF VICKSBURG AND NATCHEZ

ENLISTED MEN

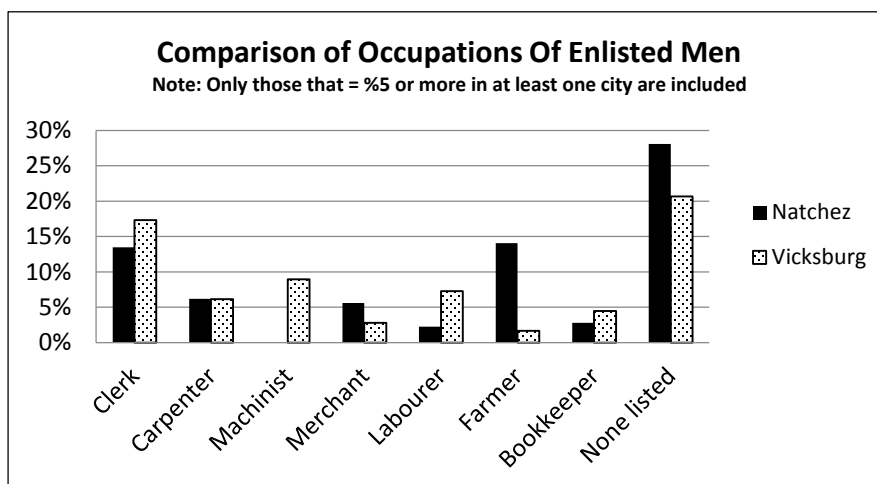


APPENDIX D

COMPARISON OF VICKSBURG AND NATCHEZ ENLISTED MEN'S
CONNECTIONS TO OTHER REGIONS

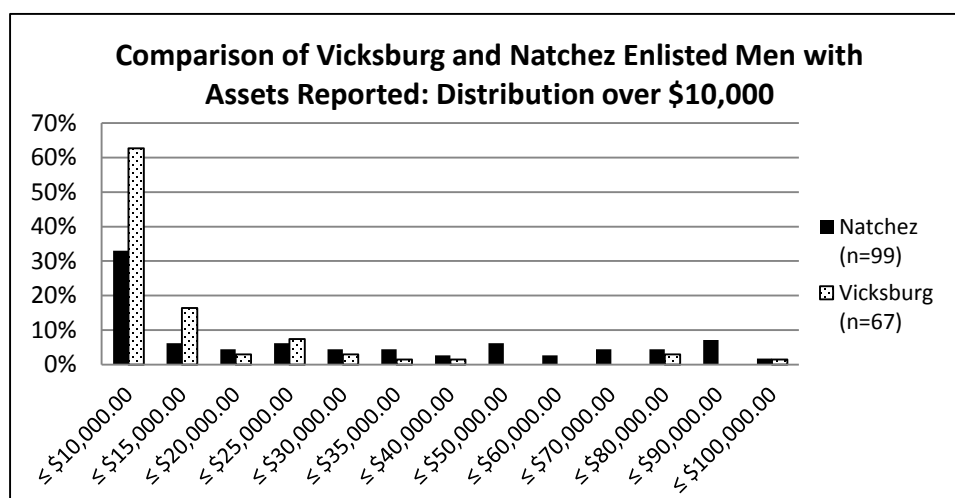
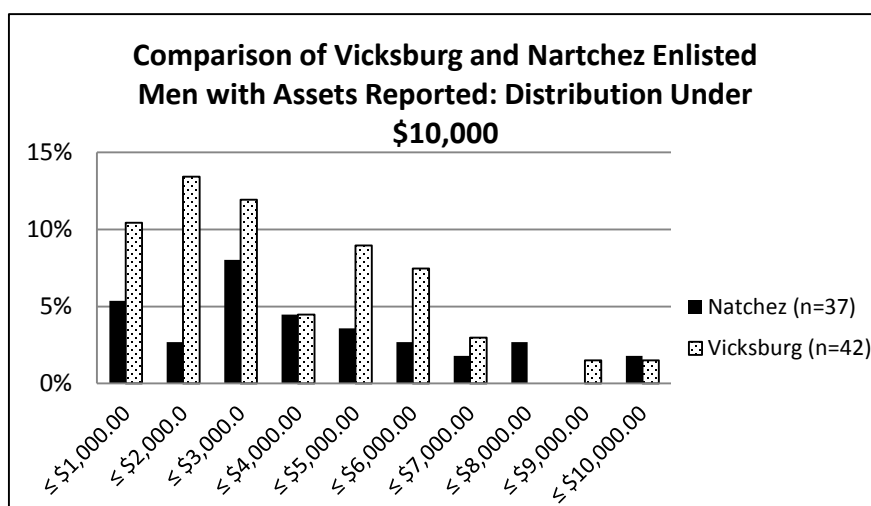
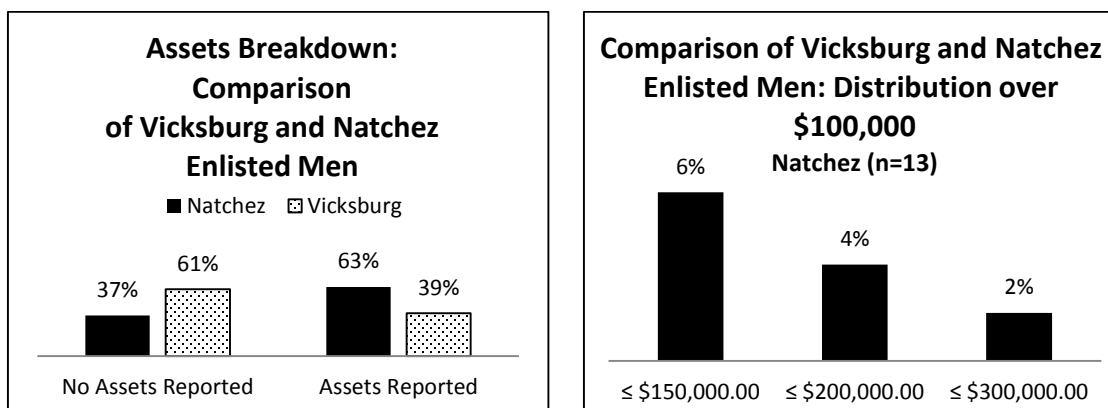


APPENDIX E

COMPARISON OF VICKSBURG AND NATCHEZ ENLISTED MEN'S
OCCUPATIONS

APPENDIX F

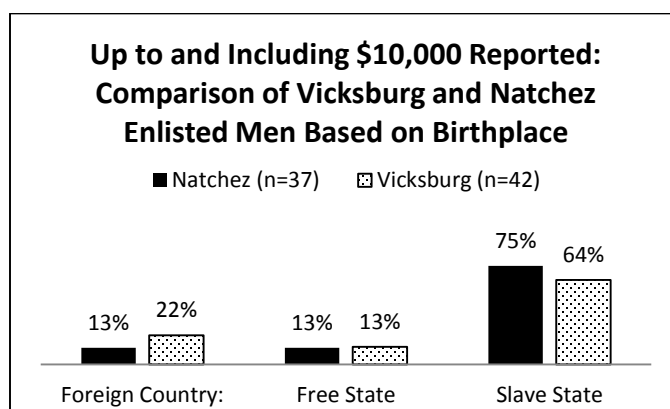
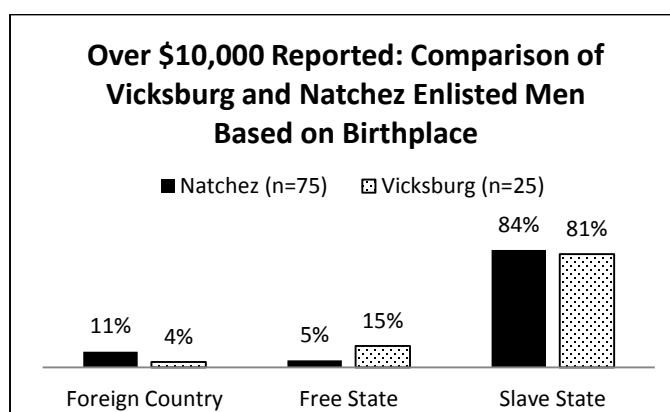
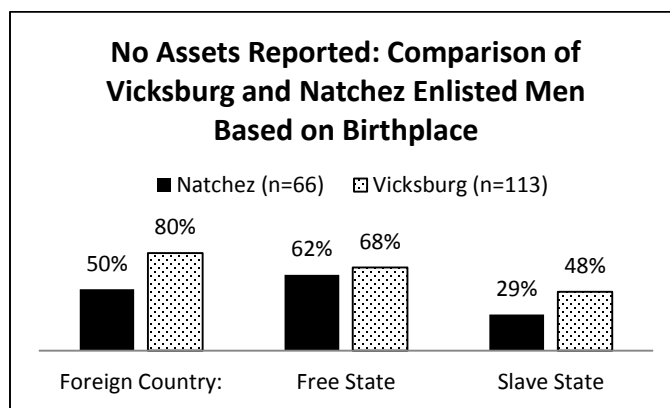
COMPARISON OF THE ASSETS REPORTED IN 1860 BY VICKSBURG AND
NATCHEZ ENLISTED MEN



APPENDIX G

BREAKDOWN OF VICKSBURG AND NATCHEZ ENLISTED MEN'S ASSETS

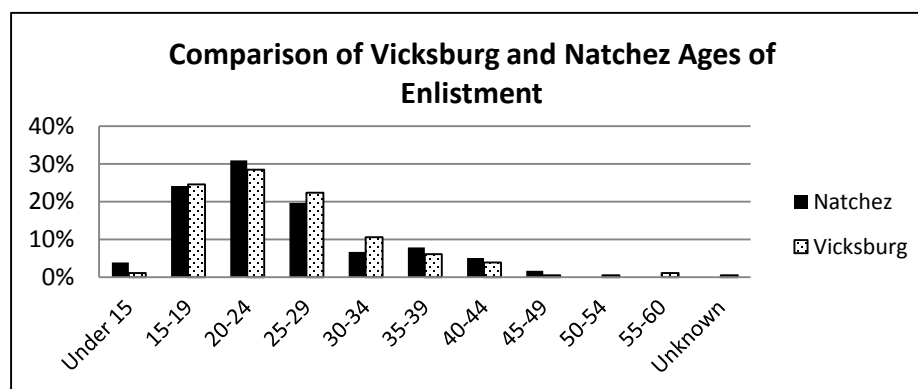
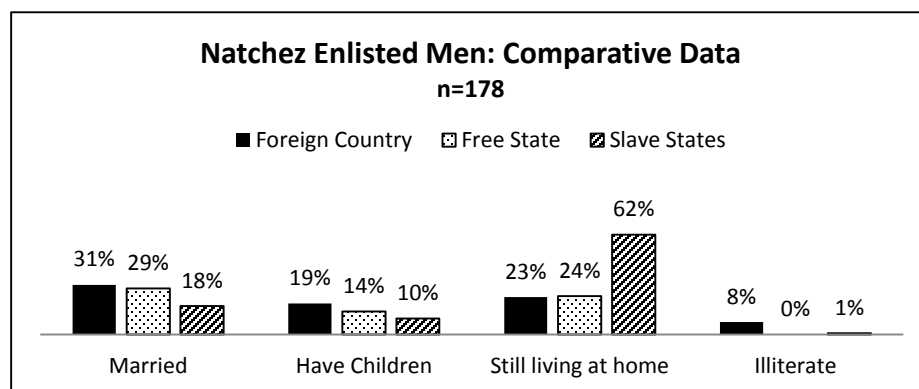
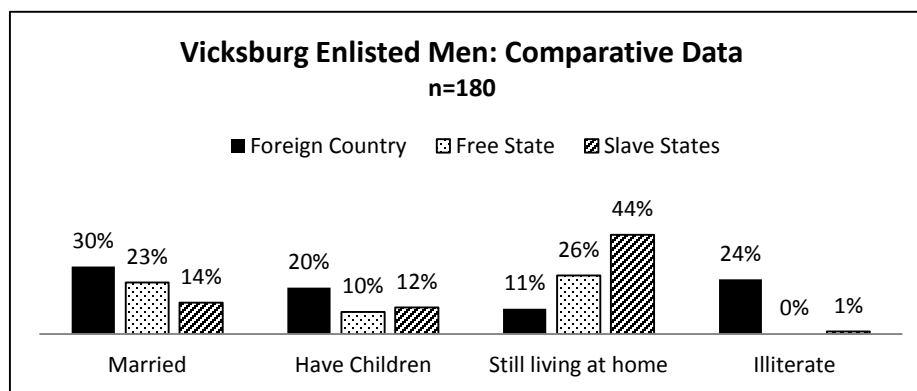
REPORTED BASED ON BIRTHPLACE



APPENDIX H

COMPARISON OF VICKSBURG AND NATCHEZ ENLISTED MEN:

ADDITIONAL DATA



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